THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—The Voice of the Silence

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LOVE AND WAR IN LITERATURE

Those who hold that human civilisation did not begin in savagery but with the Golden Age, when the Gods lived with mortals and taught infant humanity its arts and crafts, are in a better position to appraise and to appreciate mythology, be it Indian or Egyptian, Greek or Roman, and its echoes in the writings of today. All ancient literature abounds in the activity of Gods and Goddesses; though they withdrew from manifest activity many thousand years ago they have exerted power and influence on the mind of the race. During the last few centuries the very existence of the Gods and Goddesses has been doubted and denied; and yet modern poets and other creative writers often refer to them still, though not always very directly.

Human evolution took a downward course from the Golden to the Iron Age. The process of involution demanded it. Man had to touch the nadir point of the circle of growth ere he could rise to reach its zenith. Man's evolution is marked out—from innocence and ignorance to compassion and wisdom; the way lies through obstinate egotism, separative selfishness and ambitious pride; but mankind need not have lingered so long on the way. Infant humanity though ignorant was innocent, capable of being taught, and in child-like purity it learnt, as devotees do, from its immortal teachers. But as child-humanity grew up it needed not the divine aid to the same extent, and, at a later stage, it heeded not the voice of Ancient Instruction.

And so from being clear-sighted man became myopic in vision and today sees truth with a squint, mistaking rapid motion for rigid stability, opining that Matter alone is all in all and ignoring Spirit. His very virtues have become tinted with vice. His love has become lust. The power of the all-seeing Eros has become transformed and is now the force of the blind Cupid. For modern man, the mighty Kama-

Deva, the God of Impersonal Love and of Infinite Compassion has lost His divinity and is now known as mere Kama—passion and lust. Passion has another aspect—War, sprung from the seeds of wrath and greed. Today Mars, the God of War, is also the God of Passion and Lust.

War and Love bear a mysterious relation to each other. Great poets and dramatists have dealt with these themes from times immemorial. The concepts were once spiritual; they have become carnalised. The degeneration of the concepts of Love and War may well be regarded as an index of the process known as the fall of man. The Vedic Kama-Deva has lost much of his true character, if we are to judge him by actions attributed to him in later eras. Similarly, Kartikeya, the Hindu Mars, has lost almost all of his chivalry, his *virya*, the dauntless energy that wins its way to supernal truth, and his spiritual graciousness. Soldiers of today are not noble Kshatriyas but butchers, gross in planning war and in executing it.

Creators of literature in every age have tried to elevate the concepts of Love and of War. Great literature does it grandly; in effete eras we come upon jejune ideas about war and love. In this number of THE ARYAN PATH we publish several articles which deal with the service which literature renders to the human race. Pandit Amarantha Jha's paper strikes the necessary warning note against the debasement of literature by expressions of lust; but it also reveals the power of great writers to benefit humanity—mellowing the mind and awakening the heart to deeper perception.

In his own age Kalidasa, about whom Shrimati M. A. Ruckmini writes, tried to elevate the concepts of Love and of War; he handled their interrelation in a special piece full of charm and mystical significance, *viz.*, *Kumarasambhava*.

Similarly Shakespeare, a thousand years later, once again endeavoured to raise the concept of War, a subject which Mr. B. J. Wadia discusses so very interestingly. Much has been written about Shakespeare's favourite theme of Love. The part played by love in the life of the individual, the microcosm, corresponds to that of peace and order in the life of humanity, the macrocosm. War between the individual's head and his heart, his brain and his blood, projects itself as international catastrophes, enveloping the globe. Shakespeare tried to fulfil his mission of elevating the already degenerated concept of Love in many places and in many ways.

Conditions today show the great worth of the ideals upheld in one particular sonnet which deserves to be better known among our youth, whose notions about love and lust, marriage and divorce are, to say the least, superficial, weak and debasing. We need not apologise to our readers for taking space to reproduce the sonnet here :—

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove :
O no ! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

The task of great literature always is to help mankind to exorcise lust and wrath from its system, to teach it to war against both and to bring humanity back to feel and to express love :—

Now learn ye to love who loved never,—
now ye who have loved love anew.

SHAKESPEARE'S SERMON ON WAR

[**Mr. B. J. Wadia,** Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University, is a lover of English literature and a devotee of Shakespeare. This excellent essay brings to the fore some immortal aspects of a subject which at present is most topical.—ED.]

In the troublous times through which the world is passing it cannot be out of place to turn for guidance to the greatest of the English dramatists, who was also a great practical philosopher. Shakespeare's philosophy is proof against many chances and changes, and it acquires a new popularity in war-time. He is not only a dramatist of unequalled power, but also a poet of extraordinary beauty, and all that the stage can do is to lend wings to our halting imagination to rise to all the knowledge and the charm of which he is so full. He had heard a lot in his time about "the pomp and circumstance" of war. He lived through a great war and knew the threat of invasion. Several of his plays are definitely war-plays, and war is in the background of others. Shakespeare is the most typically British of England's classical poets, and in time of war there is bound to be a heightened sense of patriotism which is fed by a delight in what he wrote about his country's greatness.

It is not, however, the outward show so much as the practical philosophy underlying war that matters at present. There is first the picture of heroic war which Shakespeare drew in the historical play of *Henry V*, his soldier-king. Henry was one of his great heroes, with a few wild oats to answer for in early youth, but in the end almost a perfect man. He was evidently Shakespeare's ideal King, as is shown in the dialogue between the King and the soldiers before the battle of Agincourt. Around him the loyalty of England, Scotland and Wales is organized. But his King, however exalted, is a man and not a fetish. "Though I speak it to you," Henry is made to say,

I think, the king is but a man, as I am ; the violet smells to him, as it doth to me ; all his senses have but human conditions ; his ceremonies laid by, in

his nakedness he appears but a man; and though his affections are higher mounted than ours, yet, when they stoop, they stoop with the like wing; therefore when he sees reason of fears, as we do, his fears, out of doubt, be of the same relish as ours are.

Shakespeare understood that it was by a noble comradeship between King and soldier, and through the King's hold upon the soldier's heart, that at Agincourt despair was turned into victory. It was old Falstaff who said to Justice Shallow when they were discoursing together on the qualities desirable in a soldier, "Care I for the limb, the thews, the stature, bulk and big assemblance of a man? Give me the spirit, Master Shallow." When we hear these words coming from a drunken knight, we feel that this is the wisdom of a man who has a claim on our respect even when he denies it to himself. Is it not the same spirit which accounts for the inexhaustible endurance of Russia today?

War is described as "grim-visaged"; and we have it in the same play of *Henry V* that

In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility;
But when the blast of war blows in our ears
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard furrowed rage....

If one would have an account of the horrors of war, as they might be set out by a pacifist, he will find it in the mouth of the same monarch, for he was the most various of men, able to satisfy the needs and the tastes of all sorts of people.

England's destiny and her international renown were never absent from Shakespeare's mind. It was the country's greatness, and not the empire, that he harped upon. But with all his feeling for the glory of Henry V, the poet has clearly expressed his sense of the waste of lives in iniquitous wars, a grim phenomenon which repeats itself in every great war, as it does even now. In later years Shakespeare morally sickened of the romance of war, for the French wars were some of the worst that were ever waged. He must have experienced a sharp revulsion from an earlier strain of thought, when he wrote a wicked play like *Troilus and Cressida*, perhaps intended as a foil to the glowing picture drawn in *Henry V*, for it is a play in which we get heroes that cure us of hero-worship. It is a play that might well have been written by a modern dramatist about the last Great War and the present one. It contains a passage that may be applicable even to Coalition Governments which do not always adhere together :—

O madness of discourse,
That cause sets up with and against itself!
Bi-fold authority! where reason can revolt
Without perdition, and loss assume all reason
Without revolt.

It is a play in which Shakespeare meant perhaps to score out the theory of heroic war, for war was not always a chivalrous struggle, but merely the art of crafty murder, or

at best "murder in uniform." It was no longer to him an education in the virtues of valour and sacrifice, because cowards can creep safely out of the line of fire, and the best and noblest of men can be treacherously slain. Jealous commanders might awake, not to the call of duty, but to the desire for revenge. This was his later philosophy; and is it not all still true? Have we not seen reason and wisdom pleading for peace and justice in our own time, and the plea borne down by lust and passion, red-hot for war and conquest? The lightness of woman, however, is the major subject of this play, lightness transformed into the wickedness of Cressida. From her Shakespeare has spared no touch to show the wanton's cold heart and a head steeped in malice. Then it was a war for woman. Now it is war for dominion, or rather domination, based on the copiousness of hate shot as if from a serpent's fang.

If we apply our minds closely to all that Shakespeare wrote about war, we will find in his works a good treatment for the agony and the hopes of the times through which we are passing. He knew the mischief wrought by false rumours when he wrote in *King John*:—

> O, let me have no subject enemies,
> When adverse foreigners affright my towns
> With dreadful pomp of stout invasion!

Whether it be peace or war, he taught men to look calmly, even laughingly, at all that was passing around and to say:—

> Though Fortune's malice overthrow my state,
> My mind exceeds the compass of her wheel.

Just as Hamlet and Othello and Lear had to work out a destiny which would give them a peaceful environment, so have the people of all nations to seek and to find the heroic way of life. Shakespeare also enjoins a rational attitude to the possibility of injury which may result even in death:—

> Cowards die many times before their deaths,
> The valiant never taste of death but once!
> Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
> It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
> Seeing that death, a necessary end,
> Will come when it will come.

Perhaps this is more easily said than done. It is a philosophy that makes men bow to "Fate," "Kismet," or "Destiny." Fearlessness is the essence of wisdom, but not all are cast, like Hector, in a tragi-heroic mould. One sentiment runs throughout Shakespeare's teaching, as if it were its life-blood, and it is expressed in the great line, "There is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so." This may be true; but every man cannot be expected to be so philosophically inclined. Yet it is only by a humanist approach to the problems of modern life that we can hope to see life grow better and brighter for the future.

Thought manifests itself in various forms, and so does sorrow. There is enough of sorrow in the world at present. There always was enough, but there is even more of it now. Shakespeare knew what sorrow was

for he is the supreme humanist of literature. He knew its sacred truth. But his final words were, "What's gone and what's past should be past grief." Very few of us have the philosophic mind to apply this truth in practice. It is our common experience that we are overwhelmed with sorrow at our loss. Time heals many wounds, but there are wounds which never heal. They leave a void which the years cannot fill up. It is difficult to forget, though thinking about it will do no good. There is also the "dry sorrow" which drinks a man's blood. But the poet's teaching is still true. A man must acquire control over his thoughts and feelings. Hope springs eternal, and there is a hand that guides. After all there is unspeakable satisfaction in knowing that what was best was done. Then only, with courage in the mind and peace in the heart, we can sit back and leave the issue to the great Creator. How true it is to say,

> O that a man might know
> The end of this day's business ere it come!
> But it sufficeth that the day will end,
> And then the end is known.

We do not know how Shakespeare spent the last days of his life. If he expressed disgust with mankind in *Timon of Athens*, he did not let that be his last word. Even at the end his teaching was, "The rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance." With great dignity he broke the wand of Prospero, and never wrote again.

> Deeper than did ever plummet sound
> I'll drown my book.

This was his farewell to the world he had enriched beyond measure and for all time.

Shakespeare, like Horace sixteen hundred years before him, prophesied that his "powerful rhyme" would live longer than the marble and gilded monuments of kings and princes. It was not an overstatement, for his work has survived even "the wreckful stage of battering days," though more than three hundred years have passed since the humble church on the banks of his gentle Avon received his bones for their final rest.

B. J. WADIA

> Jog on, jog on the foot-path way,
> And merrily hent the stile-a:
> A merry heart goes all the day,
> Your sad tires in a mile-a.

—SHAKESPEARE

THE FUNCTION OF THE SOCIAL NOVEL TODAY AND TOMORROW

[**Dr. E. Kohn-Bramstedt** is already known to our readers. He is a sociologist and a historian of literature and has written a number of books based on his studies with special application to German literature and German sociology. He is thus admirably qualified to write on the theme treated in this article. He holds that the task of sociology in literature is to secure sociological information through an analysis of literature and at the same time to study literature by examining its social implications.—ED.]

What will the social novel of the future, in the coming post-war period, be like? This is a question of importance to the artist as well as to the social philosopher, and to all people interested in adult education. The function of the social novel is formally speaking always the same: to make life articulate and visible, to make understandable through a concrete picture what you and I and the neighbours' children are thinking and doing, and why they are thinking and doing it. The novelist should analyse but, different from the psychologist, also "synthesize"; that means, describe a small totality of life rounded in itself with a beginning and an end. Only the greatest artist can draw a vast social panorama with real characters, real background and moral depth as Tolstoy did in his immortal *War and Peace*, where the convulsions of a war-ridden society are as truly depicted as are the weaknesses and idiosyncrasies of the generals or the weird incomprehensibility of sudden death.

The social novel stands half-way between psychological narrative and sociological tract, the former being interested in the behaviour and the peculiarities of a certain individual, the latter in those of a social type. The social novel undertakes to portray people as both types and individuals, and to combine the freshness of the concrete with the significance of the typical. It wants to inform and to entertain at the same time. It may or may not have a message but it must in any case illustrate the impact of the milieu on the individual, the connections between individual and group, the antagonism and the co-operation between various groups, generations, classes or nations. In other words, it brings social atmospheres and social attitudes to life.

Take a few representative social novels from our time, not of the highest artistic calibre perhaps, but mature, full of lucid understanding and accurate in social detail. The first shows the well-regulated life in a comparatively stable society between the two wars: a life typical of the male upper-class North American

who graduated twenty-five or thirty years ago at Harvard or Yale, went into business and contracted a rather, though not completely, successful marriage: *H. M. Pulham, Esq.*, by Marquand.

The second describes the chaotic conditions in Germany in the twenties—unemployment, political intrigue, the hopeless despair of the demobilised, the triumph of crushing circumstances over men's effort to exist and to rise: *Three Comrades* by E. M. Remarque—a novel, incidentally, illustrating the mental climate which later made the rise of Fascism in Germany possible.

The third book is given to the lives of the peasants under Fascism in Italy, the drabness of the existence of the *cafoni*, their superstition, their passivity towards a régime which they do not understand; at the same time the bitter hopelessness of the few who dare to oppose Mussolini's régime through underground channels is forcefully brought out. A book great as a social document, but also great through the deep sympathy of the author for the thwarted man in the street, through a mixture of tragedy and hilarious fun—*Bread and Wine* by Ignazio Silone.

If we turn our attention from the social novel of today to that of tomorrow, we must distinguish between their function and their problems. As to the function of the social novel, two serious competitors will have to be reckoned with—the movies and the radio. For the tired citizen, who is more in search of entertainment than of instruction, both have one advantage over the novel; they offer him their dishes ready-made and assist the enquiring mind with either optical impressions or with the easily conveyed logic of sound. The radio has proved the more dangerous rival of the two. Yet as a means of spreading literary culture it is still in an early stage. While it is easy to bring a short story to life over the ether, it is difficult, if not impossible, to produce a satisfactory radio version of, let us say, *War and Peace*. The radio cannot do justice to its wealth of minute observation and is unable to reproduce the whole fabric of social types and attitudes embodied in this book.

On the other hand, it can be safely said that the war, at least in Britain, has increased the demand for more serious reading matter. Men who five years ago argued hotly over the Spanish Civil War, looking at it from a purely political angle, now learn to see what this war was and meant from a social and human point of view by reading Hemingway's masterly novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Hemingway describes the actions, reactions and fates of a score of human beings on both sides with a deep detachment that, however, never lacks human sympathy.

What subjects do we expect the future novelist to tackle? In any case there will be no shortage of them, for life, however terrible and depressing its events may be, is always full of variety and interest for

the born artist. But I should think that the following focus-points will deserve preferential treatment :—

(1) Man, beast and hero in war time. Man facing danger unflinchingly. A life-like portrait of the deeds of the pilot, of the men of the Merchant Navy and of the men and women in the street facing destruction. Such a novel should show most graphically how the few saved the many; but also how bravery could sometimes go hand in hand with antisocial behaviour in other fields. Man can be human, but he cannot be superhuman for long. Only some years after the war will a true picture of the attitudes and the reactions of people in it be possible. Then the pitfalls of either romantic glorification or pacifist debunking should be avoided. War, as Tolstoy has so clearly demonstrated, is sometimes an unavoidable evil; but whilst man has to bow before the iron law of necessity, he can win his inner freedom by rising to the higher possibilities in him. He can mature as well as degenerate in war, and he is actually doing both.

(2) The transition from war to peace; the problems of adjustment and maladjustment in the political, economic and psychological spheres. This transition after the last war has been aptly described in the novels of Remarque, Robert Graves and others. Let us hope that this time the transition will be better planned and will work itself out more smoothly than twenty-five years ago; but there will be many social problems as the result of the emerging of a Brave (or otherwise) New World.

(3) The epic of the suppressed nations and their fight for liberation. Many pathetic stories will be told of events in Poland, in Holland and in France etc ; of ruthless persecutions, of torture and death, of unheard-of resistance and heroism, of inventive genius hatched by the grim necessity of underground struggle. The social novel of the future must give us a clear impression of the shades and shadows in the life of the suppressed, of famine and exploitation, of sabotage and inspiration, of despair and of unceasing courage.

(4) International co-operation. This war was started by the madness of perverted nationalism. Our aim must be to replace the sinister fire of nationalism by the broader light of an international order and co-operation. At present there exists an international of foreign slave labourers in Germany, and, very different from it, the friendly international of the United Nations. Today in London Englishmen fraternise with Americans, and both mix with the exiled Poles, the Free French and many others. This collaboration in the common cause should widen our horizon and keep away any narrow nationalism. The observant mind of the novelist is, for instance, attracted by the intermarrying of Polish soldiers and Scottish girls. To him social and national mixing opens new vistas and problems.

(5) The relationship between the sexes. This is an eternal subject for

realistic prose and idealistic poetry alike. Yet it has received a new significance through the changed sociological function of women in our society. As in the last war, the prestige of women in the democratic countries is growing. Women share the many burdens of this war equally with men ; they suffer from raids and other enemy action ; they serve in the armed forces ; they fill many and often important posts now vacated by men ; in the occupied countries they pay with their lives for their will to resistance, as do the men. War with its brutality but also with its heroism makes for equality between the sexes. For many reasons women are never more indispensable from an economic, political and human point of view than in war time.

But apart from this new balance between the sexes, war has even a more far-reaching influence on their relationship. As it changes many accustomed aspects, so it both loosens and deepens the love ties between man and woman. The vicissitudes of war remove many love and marriage partners from their peace-time surroundings. The man is called up or evacuated and so may be the woman ; new ties are formed and old ones gradually fade out. It is a significant sociological fact that, for instance, the divorce cases before the London Divorce Court increased from 2650 in the autumn term of 1939 to nearly 3,000 in the autumn term 1942. The middle-aged suddenly rediscover the fascination of new love and forget husbands, wives, children.

On the other side, the uncertainty of life, the omnipresence of danger, have deepened many ties. The tenderness and the profundity of genuine love become all the more radiant against the background of destruction and the fleetingness of our existence. All this should make a fascinating theme for a competent social novelist. His work will portray the variety of types and fates, the beings led astray by passions and those mastering them, the whole symphony of higher and lower tones, of heart-rending suffering and of quiet sacrifice, of intrigue and of pathos, of resolute devotion to duty and of unbridled longing for a day's wild pleasures. It needs sensitive ears and high skill to make the symphony audible to others.

(6) This leads us to our last point : the rôle of faith and religion today and in the future. The insecurity of life has produced the snatch-pleasure-while-you-may attitude, but it has also brought about a deeper religious feeling in many. It would be too much to speak of a religious revival but it is a fact that today there are more people who wonder about the meaning of life and of death than before the war. Some return to the belief in the essential Christian doctrines, trusting that they can thus find a path to a higher and purer life. Others prove through their actions that they have acquired a new kind of stoicism as an attitude of accepting what fate has in store,

not with indifference, but with equanimity.

This will be another task for the novelist, to illustrate how suffering and tragedy have developed some of us; how, perhaps for the first time, we have experienced what comradeship is and what sacrifice means. An attempt at international reconstruction without a deeper belief in eternal values will not lead very far. The doctrine of the Rights of Man is no longer a piece of academic tradition, but an essential prerequisite for any sound social life. A good social novel has not only to describe social conditions and social changes, and to observe the medley of egotism and altruism which determines the human drama. It should also depict what is going on inside a human being when he fights because he believes.

From a purely artistic point of view an effective novel need not convey a message; Galsworthy's epic of the Forsytes has none and Balzac's unsurpassed social portraits are without any; others, like Sinclair Lewis's books with their live-wire American types, imply the message more than express it. Yet there are numerous social novels with a message, from Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to the Dane's Martin Andersen Nexö's, great proletarian novel *Pelle, the Conqueror*. Perhaps it is less the job of the social novelist to preach than to illustrate, less to philosophise than to circumscribe vital questions by the concrete stories of people of flesh and blood. The moral of a story must not be elaborate and didactic, but must be impressive and speak for itself.

The many tragic and heroic episodes happening today indicate better than general reflections the meaning of liberty and of slavery, the perversion of nationalism and the service of true socialism. There will be plenty of material for the social novelist of the future. He will find it in the events of our time: round the next corner, in a French village, in the mass slaughter in Russia, in the thirst for freedom which is alive everywhere, in Poland as well as in India, in Norway as well as in Greece. The stones are there, ready for the master-builder to create a powerful structure portraying the drama and the tension of life in the present, and the painful birth of what we hope will be a better and juster world.

E. K. Bramstedt

WHERE KALIDASA EXCELS

"SAKUNTALA"—A PLAY OF NATURE

[**Shrimati M. A. Ruckmini** is an advocate of the Madras High Court. She writes to us—" I have ventured to argue in support of a comparatively new approach to a correct understanding of the real dramatic significance of *Sakuntala.* "—ED.]

In spite of the voluminous (by no means luminous in many instances) mass of expository and critical literature that has sprung up round the works of Kalidasa, they continue to occupy the focus of attention and to inspire evaluatory reflections. The ambition of every poet, according to the Sanskritic classics on Literary Criticism, should be to write a true Drama (*Natakantam-kavitvam*) ; and the implication undoubtedly is that one cannot be a dramatist at one's will and pleasure. *A great dramatist is born, not made.* By universal consensus of judgment Kalidasa was a great dramatist, and he excels everything else in that line in his *Sakuntala* which has been acclaimed a striking work of art by scholars Oriental and Occidental. I shall indicate in this contribution a comparatively new approach to a study of *Sakuntala* which can be viewed as a typical *play of Nature.*

The greatest testimony to Kalidasa's excellence as a dramatist is his *Abhijnyana Sakuntalam.* It is believed to be his *magnum opus* (*Kalidasasya-sarvasvam*). The freshness and the vigour of his creative fancy, the exuberance of his imagination, the richness of his poetic genius, his profound insight into the working of the human heart, his uncanny appreciation of the tender emotions, and above all the gift of dramatisation which makes his characters throb throughout with dynamic life, have easily enabled him to convert a cut-and-dry historical episode of the *Mahabharata,* depicting the love between Sakuntala and Dushyanta, the separation of the lovers for a time and their reunion after a long lapse, into a living drama of conflict of emotions, with the different personalities fulfilling their destinies according to a divinely ordained plan and programme. The skeleton of the epic is transformed into a living model, and the characters are presented in such vigour and freshness as easily command and elicit the sympathy and the fellow-feeling of the audience.

A beginning can be made anywhere. The heroine, Sakuntala, belongs to the rare type of womanhood known as the *Padmini* type, *i.e.*, a type that reveals a happy and harmonious combination of physical charms with intellectual, moral and spiritual attainments. Sakuntala is not a modern cinema-star or a coquette. Nor is Dushyanta a

modern dandy! The feelings of the hero and the heroine should be expressed as delicately as possible. So the poet has introduced two female characters who act as constant companions of the heroine, who make fun, interpret symbolism, convey messages and supply always the missing link in the progress of love. In a similar capacity more or less appears Vidushaka in reference to the hero. Most modern matchmaking is based on the striking of profitable and calculated bargains. The *Padmini* type of heroine shuns all bargains. She loves just because love is the best form of self-expression under the circumstances of life and as the unfolding of a dedicated life. So, deliberately, but discreetly and skilfully, the poet omits reference to the bargain that Sakuntala would agree to marry the king only on condition that her son be made the heir-apparent. Such a commercial-minded bargain would have been alien to the dignity and the magnanimity of the *Padmini* heroine.

It is again to arouse the natural reaction in the minds of the audience that the poet manages Sakuntala's return to Dushyanta at a time when she is *enceinte*. The audience must be all sympathy for the heroine in these circumstances.

The crucial and central incident in the development of the plot is the strange and mysterious behaviour of the King who has forgotten all about his *Gandharva* marriage with Sakuntala, whom he fails to recognise and flatly repudiates. In the bland epic narration Dushyanta must appear as a downright hypocrite, fit only to be delivered up to the criminal law of the land! The poet, however, saves the entire situation in an extraordinarily clever manner by making use of the supernatural or the preternatural, in which the average Indian mind has deep-rooted faith. The curse of the irate sage Durvasa, the loss of the marriage-ring in a tank, and the consequent forgetfulness of the King of the sacred alliance contracted by him with a confiding and devoted heroine, are pressed into service to make the conduct of the King natural and almost inevitable in the circumstances and context.

The lasting emotional impression left in the minds of the audience after the completion of the drama is technically known as *Rasa* (*i.e.*, the sum-total of emotional reaction). The *Sthayee-bhava* or the permanent emotional reaction-pattern is like the "ocean melting all salt into water" which, not being interrupted by any contrary feeling, pervades and surcharges the whole play with its influence.

In *Sakuntala* the predominant emotional make-up is the *Sringara-Rasa*. It is at the same time *Ujjvalita*, made to blaze with life and splendour. In the service of this basic emotion others co-operatively commingle to enhance the general dramatic tone. The King's wonder at the deer he was hunting having dragged him an unconscionably long distance contains an element of good-

humoured self-reproach. The King sees himself as others would see him! The celebrated stanza—*Grivabhanga-bhiramam*—in the *sragdhara* metre is resonantly onomatopoetic and immediately suggests the flash-like darting of the deer hither and thither. The natural feeling of fear is there (*Bhaya*). The general background furnished by the abode of the ascetics and saints to whom all sex is taboo, Dushyanta's own *Dharmic* nature, and the nurture and up-bringing of Sakuntala by a saint-guardian within the walls of a hermitage, all go to keep up the *Santi-Rasa* and prepare the way in a subtle and unconscious manner for the development of the plot.

Bhartrihari has depicted an acute analysis of the tendencies of different persons. The mental tendencies and inclinations differ from person to person. Some are indifferent to the world and are engaged in devotional contemplation of the Supreme Being. Some spend their days in pursuits moral, political etc. Some specialize in the enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses. It is one thing to note the different emotions in different persons or groups of persons, but it is totally a different and withal a more difficult thing to portray a conflict of these diverse emotions *in one and the same person*. The conflicting emotions and impulses, the conflict of duties, the conflict between reason and passion, are all portrayed by Kalidasa with remarkable insight into the mental mechanism of mankind. Dushyanta's mental quandary is strikingly expressed in Act 2. His duty to the hermits drags him one way. His duty to his parents drags him another. The King's mind is compared to a current obstructed by a hillock and the conflict is thus embodied in a simile so singular and suggestive that Kalidasa's aptitude for similes is seen to be by no means exaggerated or overrated. (2. 17. "*Krityayoh...Srotovaho-yatha.*")

The King's natural hesitancy before he embarks on his love-venture in a place of hermits, and in an atmosphere saturated with saintliness and the spiritual prowess of ascetics who can even consume one to ashes by a mere glance, finds embellished expression at the hands of the poet. The confession of faith of an indomitable and inveterate lover is put into the mouth of the hero. "I am aware of the potency of penance. It is also known to me that the maiden is in another's power. Yet, I am not able to wean this heart from her." (*Jane-tapaso-veeryam...nivartayitum.*) There is no *Blitzkrieg*, no taking by storm in the progress of genuine love. Surely the King, notwithstanding his royal position and power, could not carry away his bride as Lochinvar is reported to have done!

The same naturalness and freedom from artificiality are seen in the dawn of love in the heart of the heroine. Of course, Sakuntala must have come into contact with many men, good, bad and indifferent, even in the seclusion of her Asrama, but till the time her eyes caught

sight of Dushyanta she must have been absolutely indifferent to the opposite sex. When love begins germinating she is surprised with herself. She exclaims—" How is it indeed that on seeing this person, I have become susceptible of an emotion which is inconsistent with a penance-grove ? " (*Tapovana-virodhino-vikarasya.*) Kalidasa has portrayed the typical Indian Ideal of Womanhood in love in all its simplicity, its unself-conscious glory, modesty and bashfulness. The poet makes Anasooya question the King regarding his ancestry, his status, etc. Sakuntala is a passive but an intensely interested party. Addressing her palpitating heart she says, " Be not impatient. Anasooya gives expression to what lies hidden in you." The onset of love disturbs deeply the mental and emotional equilibrium of both the hero and the heroine, and this reciprocity of reaction is the characteristic of the *Dhirodatta* hero and the *Padmini* heroine, *i. e.*, magnanimity, fortitude, bashful restraint *et hoc genus omne*. The different *Bhavas* ably co-operate to portray the first reaction of love when members of the opposite sex are brought into contact by Destiny, as it were. The two types *Sthayi* and *Vyabhichari* bhavas find striking illustration in the play.

The progress of the stealthy, insistent, subtle love which consumes the hero and enslaves all his faculties is sketched by Kalidasa with the finest of touches. The first stage is *Abhilasha*, the dawn of desire. The King's address to the Bee is typical. While a hundred considerations and inhibitions, social, moral etc. prevent the King from approaching his beloved, the Bee hovers persistently and kisses the lips of Sakuntala. No wonder the love-intoxicated King envies the Bee ! The stanza " *Chala-pangam. . .tvam-khalu-kritee*" (1.21), embodying the figure of speech known as " *Vyatirekalankara* " and patterned into the " *Sikharini* " metre has been admired as an astonishing work of art describing nature at its best in a sweet musical metrical cadence. The contrast between the Bee and the King is pathetic and poignant. The King would readily surrender his crown to get transformed into the Bee if by the wave of a magic wand the metamorphosis could be accomplished ! The jealousy here indicated is an excellent illustration of " *Dhvani.*"

The intermediate stages may be easily imagined. When the lovers come face to face their attachment deepens. The lover does not fail to note even the slightest gesture or movement made by his beloved. Such gestures are more eloquent than the loudest avowals and protestations of love. By making use of the figure of speech known as the " *Anumana-alankara,*" the poet describes with penetrating insight into the psychology of the love-smitten heart how the King interprets the different gestures of Sakuntala.

That a certain amount of vehement declaration is inevitable during the progress of love, even when the lovers

are rational and highly intellectual, is an aspect of nature delineated in pleasing colours by Kalidasa. Consider for instance the King's vehement declaration that he, already rendered lifeless by the arrows of Cupid, is again killed by Sakuntala's jealousy-ridden suggestion that a King revelling in his harem would not be a devoted lover! Sketching the further development of love the poet has brilliantly portrayed the *Unmada-avastha* (intoxication-stage) and *Vipralambha* (separation) contexts. The plot is thus skilfully interwoven till the *Garbhasandhi* (central core or fruition) in the Fourth Act. The successful union of the lovers is marred by the curse of the saint. The curse eventually vanishes and the lovers are reunited in undying felicity after having passed through the fiery ordeal of countless vicissitudes. In another attractive simile, the *forte* of Kalidasa, the reunion of the hero and the heroine is compared to the union of Rohini and the Moon after an eclipse (*Smritibhinnamohatamaso . . . rohiniyogam*).

Certain conclusions may now be brought together. Kalidasa has intimately linked animate and inanimate Nature. He is not a nature-poet in the Wordsworthian sense, perhaps. Inanimate nature reacts on man, and man in turn sometimes shapes and at other times submits to such Nature. The whole creation is instinct with life. When Sakuntala leaves the Asrama even the trees seem to shed tears! There is no need to accept Tagore's interpretation of *Sakuntala* as an attempt to etherealise love, lifting it above mundane transactions. Sakuntala and Dushyanta are typical representatives of two human hearts in love, which is perfectly natural, completely mundane, quite in consonance with the environment.

Kalidasa was neither an anchorite nor a moralist. He was a careful student of nature animate and inanimate. He had an uncanny insight into human psychology. He was a humorist. (See the Fishermen's scene.) He saw with perfect vision the different aspects of human nature. To my mind Kalidasa stands supreme as an artist who has taken every poetic element, character, Rasa, sentimental and stylish embellishment, and merged them all in a grand harmony and a sublime totality (*Auchitya*). Sense-perception and the admiration of beauty are not taboo to Kalidasa. Kalidasa excelled as a Nature-poet *par excellence*. Whether he was describing a plant or a creeper, the bee or the buffalo, the calm of the Asrama or the excitement of the hunt, above all the mysterious emotion of love between the sexes, he held as it were a mirror to Nature. In Kalidasa we see a faithful replica of nature. His works are model microcosms of artistic perfection. In them the macrocosm has found faithful reproduction. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in *Sakuntala*. There is no need to import metaphysics or moralism into *Sakuntala*. The characters are human, all too human. They move on the stage with the dignity and the inevitability of all human emotions and transactions. In the hands of the creative artist Kalidasa, nature animate and inanimate has found the fullest, the most faithful and the fairest handling which elevates his art at once to the objective plane of universality, containing an eternal appeal.

M. A. RUCKMINI

AN OLD STORY

[We take great pleasure in welcoming to our pages a very well known South Indian writer. **Rajasevaprasakta Shri Masti Venkatesa Iyengar** is a leader of the literary renaissance in modern India and the Vice-President of the Kannada Literary Academy.—ED.]

Parasar's father had been a prominent person in the circle of devotees at Kanchi. After some years in Kanchi he had moved to Sriranga. Parasar was born some years after the shifting to Sriranga. The father spent most of his time in attending on the Acharya, and all matters in the house, from getting the worship of God conducted to looking after the education of the son, became the mother's responsibility. Growing under the care of his mother, Parasar made good progress for his years in his studies, and by approaching able teachers of the time acquired much learning. Losing his father young, he soon, by scholarship and ability, made a name equal to his father's or higher.

Scholarship and learning apart, Parasar, by the guidance of his mother in the details of daily life, learnt a hundred things which make a better thing of the life of man. On every possible occasion in that daily life, his mother would be stressing the need for faith in God. When all is said and done, there is nothing greater to be taught or learnt. Yet men generally are not sufficiently aware of this fact. One in a hundred speaks of it. One in how many really feels it?

If the son said that he had not been able to bring enough flowers for the worship of God, his mother would say, "How many flowers does God require? Does He require any at all? If you have many flowers, offer many; if you have few, offer a few. If you have no flowers, offer a leaf." If someone said that he was not able to go to the temple and that it was a pity, she would say, "Keep that pain in the heart, and when you fail to go to God, God will come to you." Her attention to the guests that came to the house was something to watch and to admire; and if worship was being conducted the sincerity which she put into the little acts with which she helped in the worship looked out in every movement.

While still young, therefore, Parasar became a devotee as well as a scholar. He then went to the Acharya himself for the finishing touches to his education. When, in talking of the texts and commentaries in the course of the lessons, the Acharya made some statement, Parasar would say, "Yes, that is how my mother explained the passage." When a thing like this was repeated several times the Acharya felt a little surprised. When some days later

Parasar's mother attended a gathering at which the Acharya spoke and she bent down in reverence, he said to her, "Your son is remarkably able, my mother. There is very little for me to teach him. He seems, indeed, to have learnt a great deal from you."

She answered: "I have taught him to walk humbly in the presence of the elders; the rest he has from his father and from you and the other teachers."

The Acharya said, "When I was explaining a verse of the *Gita* to him, he said that he had heard the explanation from you previously. How does it happen that you know the *Gita* so well?"

The lady replied, "My father was very learned in sacred lore. As a little girl I used to sit near him when he taught his pupils. What I heard then has remained in my mind." And this was true. The lady did not know how to read and write. But what did this matter? Reading is a means for having access to knowledge. It is not itself knowledge. One man may read and not learn so much as another may by moving amongst the learned and hearing them talk.

Parasar's mother trained his mind by talking to him frequently of the incidents of his father's life. When the father left Kanchi to go to Sriranga, he had given up all the wealth that he had earned there and started empty-handed. The lady at first felt sad at having to leave everything, but she got over the feeling easily. At the moment of leaving the house, however, she said to herself that she ought to have a small vessel with her in case her husband wished to drink some water on the way. It would be useful even after they reached Sriranga. So she took a silver cup with her. On the way they had to pass some forest country and were by themselves. The husband in front and the lady behind, they had proceeded some distance, when the lady said that she felt afraid.

The husband asked, "What have you and I to fear? Be at peace."

When they had walked a little farther the lady again expressed fear.

The husband stopped and looked at her. "Have you brought anything from Kanchi? I told you to leave everything behind," he said.

The lady said that she had brought a silver cup, thinking it might be of use to him.

Her husband said: "The God who gave in Kanchi, will He not give in Sriranga? I did not imagine that you would forget this. Now, throw away the cup."

The lady spoke no word in reply but took out the cup and threw it away. When they had gone some distance, the forest became deeper. "Are you afraid now?" asked the husband.

The lady answered, "No."

"To possess is to be afraid," he said. "Cast off property; you cast off fear."

And so they came empty-handed to Sriranga, and God who gave

prosperity in Kanchi gave it again in Sriranga. Men honoured her husband and he was able to serve the servants of God in the new place in the same way as in the old one. The son heard this story from his mother ever so many times. He loved to hear about his father and was never tired even if the same story was repeated. Listening to his mother and learning from his teachers and brooding over the courage and the faith of his dead father, Parasar developed a faith in God and a practice of His presence that in any other person might have been the reward of a very long life.

Thus, as a young man of twenty-four, Parasar had won a high place among the devotees in the temple of Ranganatha. In his house there were frequent celebrations of special worship in which numbers of people took part. It was usual for such people to share the consecrated food. To help his mother on these occasions, Parasar had in his house a Brahmin servant. This man was also useful in the performance of worship. Parasar would himself conduct the worship in his house on most days, but on the few days when he was engaged in something else, he would ask this servant to perform it.

When Parasar performed the worship he would sometimes spend hours together, and some days a very short time, at the shrine. The Brahmin servant's worship always occupied a certain length of time. It consisted of a certain amount of repetition of the texts in praise of God, certain performances and service to the images, certain offerings, all according to a scheme prescribed by the elders. In this scheme, also, there was some provision for omissions and additions, so that when a man was in a hurry, he could finish the worship somewhat more quickly than usual. When the servant conducted the worship on some days, Parasar would say to him: "Is worship over so soon?" This always hurt the man.

"Why does he ask me such a question?" he would say to himself. The third or the fourth time when he was asked this question by his master, this Brahmin thought within himself: "This gentleman sometimes finishes worship in less than a quarter of an hour; yet when I spend three quarters of an hour on it he tells me I have finished soon."

Very often when Parasar came home late his mother would come and ask, "Why are you so late, delaying the meal of all the devotees?"

"Is worship over?" Parasar would ask.

"No," his mother would say. "The Brahmin is busy in the kitchen. If he should conduct the worship, the meal would be further delayed."

Parasar would say: "Very well, mother, I shall conduct the worship myself. Spread the leaves for dinner." He would then go and finish the worship very quickly, so that the guests could begin to take their meal without delay.

"What kind of worship is this?" the Brahmin would ask himself, and when his master told him that he had finished worship too soon, he would say to himself, "Is the worship I conducted shorter than the one my master conducted yesterday? Why does he find fault with me?" In this way he developed some dissatisfaction with his master's treatment of him.

While things stood thus, there was a festival of some importance in the house. Preparing for the unusually large party that would sit down for dinner, Parasar told the Brahmin to conduct the worship himself. As the devotees who had gathered all sat outside, the servant sat near the shrine, and, repeating the sacred texts in a resounding voice, he conducted the worship fairly elaborately. When he finished and came out, however, his master said: "You repeated too few of the Tamil prayers."

This observation, made in the presence of all the guests, hurt the poor servant a great deal. Unable to contain his vexation, he walked in and said to Parasar's mother: "Madam, my master treats me with insufficient courtesy. In the presence of so many people he tells me that I finished worship soon, that I omitted the texts of praise or the Tamil texts or other texts. I have to bend my head in shame."

The lady said: "It is possible that you do omit some text of praise or other text which is essential. That may be why he says so. Do you omit such texts?"

The servant answered, "Well, madam, I may omit some texts, but I repeat at least the other texts. But my master sometimes finishes worship without repeating a single text. Is the worship I conduct more incomplete than that?"

The lady said, "Do not worry about it too much. He is young, you see. Even if he is careless and says a word or two you should not take it too much to heart." That evening she called her son and said: "Son, if you tell our Brahmin in the presence of so many people that he omitted this text and that text in conducting worship, it makes him look small and he feels unhappy."

"Yes, mother," said Parasar. "But it did not strike me that he would take it in that way. Quite so. Why should I make him feel small? I shall not say such things to him hereafter." The Brahmin servant who was inside the house could hear this and was greatly pleased.

Some time after this there was a series of dinners in the house on account of the services for the Dasara. One day Parasar performed the worship and finished it in perhaps ten minutes. The next day he asked the servant to perform the worship. That man really took longer. But when the worship was over, Parasar, forgetting the promise he had made to his mother, told the man that he had finished the worship too soon. The Brahmin went inside and said to the lady, "It has begun again, madam. The master finished wor-

ship so quickly yesterday. I took much longer today. Yet, he says it was incomplete."

"I shall tell him again not to hurt you," said the lady, but thought within herself that in the man's own interest she ought to help him to understand the difference between his attitude and her son's attitude in worshipping God. So that day, as the small gathering that was present sat down to dinner and her son sat at one end, she placed a leaf next to her son's and asked the servant to sit down also and take his food. "The company is not large and I can serve." This was nothing strange or unusual. So the servant sat next to the master. The lady served ghee. Finishing all the rest of the company and arriving at her son's leaf, she said that the ghee she had brought was exhausted. "You did not take out sufficient ghee," she said to the servant, and went in. Coming out a moment later she served her son and the servant. The servant noticed that she served more freely to her son than to himself. The lady seemed to be aware of it also and said: "It is too much" and went in. The servant said to himself: "She loves her son and is partial and has served him more ghee than to me. This is quite natural. If it were my mother, she would have served more to me." After this the company began eating.

The servant took the usual little morsels of ghee and rice intended for the divinities presiding over the vital powers of the body. The few grains which he put into his mouth repeating the first text seemed to him terribly bitter. He wanted to spit them out, but could not think of doing it. He wondered what had been served as ghee and looked down the line of people dining. All of them were going on with their meal. His master, sitting beside him had finished the five little morsels for the five divinities and had mixed the rice with something else and had taken it in his hand for eating. The servant wondered what had happened to himself.

To make sure that his rice did taste bitter, he took another four grains and put them into his mouth. There was no question: the food *was* bitter. What! Was it bitter to himself and not to the others? He remembered that, on the shelf inside, the vessel of ghee was placed just beside the vessel of margosa oil. "Did the old lady by any chance serve the margosa oil to me, mistaking it for ghee?" But then, she had served the same stuff to her son and he was eating his meal like any one else. He did not seem to feel that the food was bitter. So the servant wanted to ask the lady what had been served. By that time, she came out with some other dish. The servant said to her: "Madam, what you served the second time to me and the master, was it ghee or something else?

She answered that it was ghee.

He said, "This tastes bitter. Margosa oil was placed along with ghee on the shelf. Could you, by

any chance, have brought that and served it ? "

" Really ? " asked the lady. " How absurd that would be ! I shall see. " She went in and brought a vessel and said : " Yes, you are right. I served the margosa oil instead of the ghee. " She then turned to her son and asked : " Son, I served this same stuff to you. Is it not bitter ? "

Parasar tasted the morsel he had just put into his mouth and answered, " Yes, mother, it is bitter. What happened ? Did you serve something else ? " Saying this, he put the rest of the food to one side. The lady blamed herself greatly for her carelessness and brought some fresh rice and ghee for both her son and the servant, and served it to them. While doing this, she said to her son : " Shouldn't you know that margosa oil is served to you without being asked ? How could you eat four morsels of that bitter food without knowing the taste ? "

The son said, " I know the taste of margosa oil as well as any one else ; but I was then absent-minded."

" What were you thinking of," asked his mother, " that you were unable to taste the margosa oil ? "

Parasar answered, " In worship today, this gentleman"—referring to the Brahmin servant—"repeated the text about the universal soul which plays in a spot as small as the tip of the blade of the Neevara grass. I was thinking about those words."

" A fine thing to think about," said the mother, and went in.

Parasar proceeded, " God really must be wonderful, but equally wonderful is the language employed by the Veda in describing him. In a space the size of the tip of a blade of this grass, can the great universal All-Soul play in freedom. This blade can sway in the wind and when it sways, God sways too ; and swaying when the blade of grass sways in the wind, God holds within himself the Gods of creation and destruction and existence and all the multitudinous host of divinities in the universe. How impossibly wonderful : What can that existence be which should differ so greatly from this which we call ours ? Wondering what it could be, I was unable to notice the taste of this thing which you served me." Talking of this text, the company finished the dinner.

When it was over, Parasar's mother called the Brahmin servant and said, " Friend, do you now understand the difference between your way of worship and your master's way ? "

Even before she put this question, the servant had understood that she had served the margosa oil to her son and to him intentionally. She had served more of the oil to her son than to him. He had not been able to swallow four grains of the rice spoilt with that oil. His master had taken several normal morsels of it unaware of that taste. The mother had served the oil with the object of making him see the difference between himself and her son and really he was astonished that his master's mind should actually have

been so far from his food that he did not know the taste of margosa oil. He said to the lady immediately, "Yes, madam, my master worships with all his mind. I do not know how to do that."

She said, "Not only does he worship with all his mind; he worships always. We worship only when we sit in front of the shrine; he worships when he is taking his food, when he is bathing, when he is cleaning the ground, or spreading the leaves for dinner, or when he is walking in the street. Not a moment of waking does he spend without thinking of God."

The servant begged the lady to forgive himself for having complained of her son in ignorance.

The lady said, "Now that you know the truth about your master, forgive him when he says anything that hurts you. He is my son, it is true, but even to me he is a man to to be respected. I wanted you to benefit by your contact with him. There is nothing for me to forgive in what occurred today. The offence was mine. Seating you before a leaf for dinner, I served you margosa oil with this offending hand. I have to beg you to forgive me."

The servant prostrated himself before her to show that he understood her kindness. "You treated me," he said, "as if I were another son and did what you did in order to save me. I only pray you to continue to treat me as your son and servant ever hereafter."

MASTI VENKATESA IYENGAR

CHRISTIAN WAR

The Literary Guide and Rationalist Review for November gives space to more than one attack on the assertion of Lord Halifax and others that the United Nations are fighting for Christianity. Sir Richard Gregory, the President of the British Association, who in a letter to *The Times* attacked this egotistic claim, so often and so ingenuously urged, is quoted at length. He pointed out the obvious when he mentioned the many men of other faiths and of none who were fighting on the same side. It is indeed "disconcerting, to say the least," as he wrote, to find this war represented as "a world conflict between Christianity and Paganism." Sir Richard made the constructive contribution that there are principles of social conduct common to all faiths, principles which

> are the elements of a universal faith which all men of good-will aim to promote....They constitute the nucleus of an international fellowship in which each member will respect the sacred convictions of others, and none will assume that religious aggression is essential in a crusade for the fulfilment of the primary needs of mankind.

The President of the Rationalist Press Association, Surgeon Rear-Admiral Beadnell wrote to Lord Halifax himself in a similar vein. The issue was raised also in the House of Commons on the 13th of October by Mr. Sorenson, who proposed that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs indicate to representatives of His Majesty's Government that

> the war aims of the United Nations should be expressed in the broad and generally accepted terms of the Atlantic Charter and not as the exclusive concern of Christianity or any particular body of religious faith.

The negative proposition is unexceptionable, but Mr. Sorenson goes too far and too fast in proclaiming the terms of the Atlantic Charter "generally accepted." Not by subject Asia, not by subject Africa. Not in the absence of very definite official promise that those terms will apply equally to all.

IDEALS OF LITERATURE

[The following paper, specially prepared for the P. E. N. All-India Centre, was read at its gathering in Bombay on the 12th of January 1943 by **Pandit Amaranatha Jha,** the cultured Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University. We are glad to publish it for the benefit of the readers of this magazine.—ED.]

In every generation there are obstinate questionings and searchings of the heart; the why, whence, and whither of things are discussed; final and definitive solutions are arrived at, to the satisfaction at least of a large number; and for a while the community feels that it has attained the truth. There are some on whom temporary and transitory causes operate strongly, who regard literature as a mere instrument for the propagation of views on politics and economics, who desire that it should be socially useful. There are others who subscribe to the doctrine of timeless, abstract reality, who are neither noble nor plebeian, neither infidel nor devotee, but who are convinced that the more the world changes, the more it remains the same thing. There is a distinction between the literature of the day and permanent literature. In all great works there are certain elements of momentary interest and certain elements of permanence. They are great precisely to the extent to which they have qualities that age cannot wither nor custom stale. It was well said by Carlyle that Homer interests us now because he wrote what passed in God's world and in the heart of man, which is the same after thirty centuries. The conflict is one of temperament. There are some to whom the immediate present is all-important, who are so engrossed in the external movements of their own age that they have no use for what cannot serve an immediate purpose. There are some who think that action and deeds alone beseem a man; mere idea or thought or fancy is condemned by them as being of no value. The two attitudes, the two temperaments are very well illustrated in Yeats' *Fergus and the Druid,* where the warrior and the saint hanker each after the life of the other :—

Druid : No woman loves me, no man seeks my help,
Because I be not of the things I dream.
Fergus : A wild and foolish labourer is a king,
To do and do and do, and never dream.

We hear of people being in their "right mind." We recall Plato's description of a poet as one who writes in a state of frenzy. We recognise in this a conflict between the conscious and the unconscious in our lives. In his *Ego and the Id,* Freud says :—

Psycho-analysis cannot accept the view that consciousness is the essence of mental life, but is obliged to regard consciousness as one property of mental

life, which may co-exist along with its other properties or may be absent.

Normal, practical, active, useful life is the expression, the outward manifestation of consciousness, of "the right mind." Artistic activity is the expression of the imaginative, unconscious self, of "the wrong mind." The eternal conflict between challenge and acquiescence, mind and matter, intellect and imagination is at the root of the idea that there should be only one subject for the artist, "the economic interpretation of history," the mechanical reference of all human actions to economic motives, his political and economic environment. Only man? or man as well as realities that are co-eval with man?—that is the question. This so-called division is unreal, unnatural, unnecessary.

> Wars 'twixt you twain would be
> As if the world should cleave.

Every type of literature has a perfect right to claim greatness; but the claim will be judged by high standards of vitality, vision, energy, and the ability to survive passing whims or fashions or fads of the day. All things are appropriate themes for literature, if it can invest them with significance, exalt them, and truly make them minister to the higher needs of man.

* * *

In Sanskrit literature, remarkably rich in works on rhetoric and poetics, there are elaborate discussions on the ends of literature and the means by which they are to be attained. Vamana, Rajashekhara, Prabhakara, Gangananda, Vishvanatha, Mammata, Jagannatha—and many others—have discussed this topic at considerable length. The general view seems to be that literature should produce pleasure through the emotions. There are some who stress the technical aspect; others who emphasise the choice of words; yet others who are specially concerned with elegance of style. There are some who have suggested the romantic ideal—"where more is meant than meets the ear"; some who indicate that the artist's personality must be reflected in his work; and some who think that literature must have a utilitarian purpose. Most of them regard pleasure or joy to be the main end. Amara, in his *Kávyakalpalatávritti*, speaks of literature as "*mahánandakâraka*," that which produces great, supreme happiness. Prabhakara Bhatta says in *Rasapradipa* that the end of literature is *sukhavishesha-kárittvam*, the production of special happiness. The author of *Kávyánúshásana* describes the purpose as "ánandáya." Jagannatha, enumerating the several aims of literature, speaks of *paramáhláda*, supreme happiness, and defines the charm of literature as the knowledge of the source of the production of supernatural bliss, "*ramaṇiyatá cha lokottaráhládajanakajnánagocharatá.*" Among the many purposes of literature, Prabhakara gives the first place to the pleasure caused by the emotions, "*Ih távat kávyasyánekaprayojanjanakatvepi rasasamvedanajanyam*

sukhmeva mukhyam prayojanam."

Then there are those who divide literature into three kinds—that which speaks to us in the tone of command calling upon our sense of duty and compelling obedience, without question. Or literature may speak to us in the voice of a friend, advising, showing the right path, solicitous of our welfare. Finally, it may address to us in the winning accents of the beloved, singing as angels in our ear, sweet as a dream that abides after slumber, fresh as the face of dawn, deep like love in beauty without end, cool as twilight dew, charming as the night in her silence, as the stars in their calm, now cajoling, now scorning, now laughing; bidding the soul rise upward and dance like a wave of the sea. It is a voice of manifold music. But whatever the nature of the appeal, it is not merely sensuous; there is always the underlying intention to advise, to teach, to improve. Jagannátha, in enumerating the aims of literature, says that fame, joy and the desire to obtain the approbation of the elders, the King, and God are among the principal ends. Mammata, more of a realist than others, adds to the list two more purposes, "the acquisition of riches and the destruction of evil." Some claim that technique is the soul of poetry, simile and metaphor and the other figures in which grammarians delight. Others, in particular the author of *Dhvanyáloka*, insist that suggestiveness is the chief merit of literature. Rájashekhara speaks of the writer's temperament as determining the kind of work he will produce: he will express his own personality; he will ask himself what his nature is suited for, the extent and character of his vocabulary; he will ascertain the prevailing taste of his generation, the nature of the audience for whom he writes. Jagannátha briefly attributes to the spirit and native genius the source of literary excellence.

* * *

Writers in the West have also from time to time stated what Literature is. One recalls Longinus' "echo of a great soul." "The object of poetry, as of all the fine arts," said Aristotle, "is to produce an emotional delight, a pure and elevated pleasure." He goes on to say that the poet must of necessity imitate one of three objects—things as they were or are, things as they are said or thought to be, and things as they ought to be. Horace said that the Muse has assigned to the lyre the work of celebrating gods and heroes, the champion boxer, the victorious steed, the fond desire of lovers and the cup that banishes care. Sainte-Beuve said in a notable passage that a true classic is an author who has enriched the human mind, increased its treasure, and caused it to advance a step; who has discovered some moral and not equivocal truth, or revealed some eternal passion in that heart where all seemed known and discovered; who has expressed his thought, observation, or invention, in no matter what form, only provided it be broad and great, refined and

sensible, sane and beautiful in itself; who has spoken to all in his own peculiar style, a style which is found to be also that of the whole world, a style new without neologism, new and old, easily contemporary with all time. By letters or literature Newman meant the expression of thought in language, meaning by "thought" the ideas, feelings, views, reasonings, and other operations of the human mind. Walter Pater said :—

> The representation of a specific personality in its preference, its volition, and power—such is the matter of imaginative or artistic literature—this transcript, not of mere facts, but of fact in its infinite variety, as modified by human preference in all its infinitely varied forms.

Morley said that Literature consists of all the books where moral truth and human passion are touched with a certain largeness, sanity, and attractiveness of form. Lafcadio Hearn says that literature is the expression of feeling and of emotional life. Garrod says that the end of literature is to present life, but to present it in such a manner as to eliminate what is unessential, unrelated, inorganic; to present it as a whole of which all the parts are seen to be co-operative. I think that the best description of good literature is that suggested by Sir Henry Wotton (who was himself borrowing from Vetruvius) in his *Elements of Architecture*, when he said: "Well-building hath three conditions—Commodity, Firmness, and Delight." That sums up, in my view, the essentials of Literature —usefulness (so that it shall not be merely an amusement for an idle hour); technical skill (so that it shall not be careless, formless, nerveless); and finally the exaltation of the spirit (so that, in a mood of philosophical optimism, it may call home the heart to quietness).

* * *

Truth, Goodness, Beauty—these are the divinities at whose shrine artists worship, these are the beacons that light them on their path. The quest for these is unending, a perpetual adventure that can have no cessation. It was Lessing who said that if the Creator were to offer him the whole truth in one hand and the search after truth in the other, he would unhesitatingly choose the hand that held the search after truth. Many others, since the days of jesting Pilate, have been engaged in finding an answer to his question, and have arrived at no more satisfactory solution than that of the *Vedas*, "not this," "not this." The riddle has yet to be solved, the Sphinx yet to unbend. But the craving for Truth persists. The man of letters has also to realise that he should bring out the best and finest qualities of the human mind and soul, appeal to the natural instincts of man, touch those chords that are common to everybody, and express the wisdom of life, which must be the result of the common experience of the world. As Shakespeare truly said, spirits are not finely touched but to fine issues. Finally, literature,

like all art, must strive after the beautiful and seek to banish ugliness. Someone has said that Beauty is the touch of infinity upon finite things; Professor Gilbert Murray says that Beauty is that which when seen is loved. He continues:—

If we ask Aristotle or Plato why a man should act righteously, or why he ought sometimes to sacrifice his happiness or to welcome martyrdom, they will answer, in language which to a Greek is perfectly simple though possibly strange to us, that he should do so for the sake of the beautiful.

Beauty in thought, beauty in feeling, beauty in expression, beauty in conduct, beauty in aspiration, this and nothing less than this is what the artists attempt and what they commemorate. Subject to this, there is nothing that is not fit for literary treatment. Any theme can be so exalted as to become beautiful; any Bottom can be made to utter sweet breath because he has seen a rare vision. As Walt Whitman said, Literature tills its crops in many fields, and some may flourish, while others lag. Every experience can be transformed and intensified so as to suggest to us the many fine points of life. Great art is produced when representation (or "imitation") of life is so commingled with the artist's personality as to become inseparable. It must, at its best, be capable of transporting the reader, taking him away, not indeed from the actual but into a region where he can see into the life of things, where his imagination will be alive and active, where his sympathies will be kindled and his nature purified and strengthened, where he will be inspired to noble action. The greatest literary figures are also great moralists. They have a positive faith; they deal of matters that are eternally fresh in a spirit of trust in the larger hope; they have experience of high temperature and low, they have moods of dark despair and bright sunshine, but they emerge ultimately into the broad daylight of tear-dissolving smiles. They deal with external objects, objects of nature, incidents, action, lives, facts. They deal with the heart's desire, the dreams of the past, the visions of the future; they seek to banish the lurid present and seek solace in what has been and may be again. They create figures and beings more alive and passionate than those of mere flesh and blood. They create styles of expression, individual, grim may be or graceful, intense or elegant, winning and gently persuasive, or overwhelming as with the force of a cataract. Above all, they seek to attain "the even-balanc'd soul," sense of proportion, which is represented in the structure, the technical perfection, the form of their sonnet or epic or drama, a chorus-ending of Euripides, a *doha* of Bihari, a *ghazal* by Hafiz. In steering the middle course between what Meredith calls "the ascetic rocks and the sensual whirlpools," in the consciousness of strength in restraint, in the attempt to recapture

the cool and quiet of other times, they have to transcend what is merely around them and look within. As Sir Thomas Browne says :—

The world that I regard is myself; it is the microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on ; for the other, I use it but like my globe, and turn it round sometimes for my recreation. Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition and fortunes, do err in my attitude, for I am above Atlas his shoulders. The earth is a point, not only in respect of the Heavens above us, but of that Heavenly and Celestial part within us ; that mass of flesh that circumscribes me, limits not my mind ; that surface that tells the Heavens it hath an end, cannot persuade me that I have any ; I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty ; though the number of the arc do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind ; whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of Divinity in us ; something that was before the elements, and owes no homage unto the sun.

In the final analysis, literature will be found to be great precisely to the extent to which it expresses the inner man, that changes not his nature, that aspires to be noble and pure and to have a glory-garland round his soul. A certain elevation of treatment is necessary. The emotion must be intense and keen, but there must be tranquillity too. Perfection of form, the exquisite phrase, the inevitable word come after the fever and fret are gone. The universality of great art is well brought out in these words of George Santayana, in his *Reason in Art* :—

The wonder of an artist's performance grows with the range of his penetration, with the instinctive sympathy that makes him, in his moral isolation, considerate of other men's fate and a great diviner of their secret, so that his work speaks to them kindly, with a deeper assurance than they could have spoken with to themselves. And the joy of his great sanity, the power of his adequate vision, is not the less intense because he can lend it to others and has borrowed it from a faithful study of the world.

This sanity, this clarity of vision, this sureness of touch make immediate appeal and ennoble, elevate, and sustain the reader who feels that the writer has triumphed over his ills and aches and tragedies and attained a mood in which beautiful expression is worth while, and all his thoughts and dreams, ideas and reflections glow with the light of reminiscence and recollection. Even those passages that are steeped in melancholy and blackest midnight, gain from beautiful form and finish a wistful attractiveness that cannot fail to please. This from the *Talmud* does not depress one :—

Life is a shadow, saith the Scripture, but is it the shadow of a tree or a tower that standeth ? Nay, 'its the shadow of a bird in its flight. Away flyeth the bird, and there is neither bird nor shadow.

Nor does one turn away in horror or disgust or fright from such passages as :—

We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep;

or

Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing;

or

Othello's occupation's gone;

or this stanza from one of Yeats' last poems:

All men live in suffering,
I know as few can know,
Whether they take the upper road
Or stay content on the low,
Rower bent in his row-boat
Or weaver bent at his loom,
Horseman erect upon horseback
Or child hid in the womb.

If pieces with the note of melancholy can chasten and elevate, how much more those that celebrate pure and endless light, or speak of summer's flower which is to the summer sweet, or describe love that finds the way over steepest rocks, or tell of the thrilling voice of the cuckoo-bird in spring-time, or of those who run because they like it through the broad bright land, or of the joys whose treasure lies in swift, unceassing flight.

* * *

Milton hoped that his work would "fit audience find, though few." Tolstoi asserted that the simple and pious peasant is the judge of art. There we have a fundamental difference of outlook. Literature must rid itself—as far as possible—of bias, whether it be that of religion or nation or social class, or custom or age. It is because the simple unsophisticated peasant is so free from man-made conventions that Rousseau advocated a return to Nature and Wordsworth insisted that the mind's attention must be awakened to the lethargy of customs and directed to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us. Literature does not address itself to the scholar or the politician, the economist or the sage. It speaks to everyman in tones that evoke an immediate and unfailing response. Longinus said:—

In general, consider those examples of sublimity to be fine and genuine which please all and always. For when men of different pursuits, lives, ambitions, ages, languages, hold identical views on one and the same subject, then that verdict which results, so to speak, from a concert of discordant elements makes our faith in the object of admiration strong and unassailable.

Good art, says Tolstoi again, should of necessity be something capable of pleasing everybody. That is true, as his other statement that the simple peasant is the judge of art is only half-true.

A recent book, entitled *Literature as Exploration*, published by the Progressive Education Society for the Commission on Human Relations, sums up the operations of Literature as: (1) The experience of literature helps to develop the kind of imagination most needed in a democracy—the ability to understand the personality and needs of others and to envisage the possible

effect of our own actions upon the lives of others. (2) Literature acts also as one of the social agencies through which the culturally accepted images of behaviour, the constellations of emotional attitudes clustering about different relationships, and the culturally accepted social and moral standards, are transmitted. (3) In our heterogeneous democratic society, literature can enlighten the adolescent concerning the wide diversity of possible ways of life, possible patterns of relationship, and possible social and moral philosophies, from which he is free to choose. (4) Literature may also thus offer him a means of carrying on imaginatively some of the trial-and-error eliminations of patterns of behaviour necessary for a sound choice. (5) Literary experiences may help the reader to his own personality and problems objectively, and thus to understand and manage them better. (6) Through contact with the diversity of personalities and the varied experiences of his fellow-men expressed in literature, the adolescent reader may also be freed from the neurotic fears and the obsessions of guilt that often accompany the feeling that somehow he is unique and queer. (7) Literature may also suggest socially accepted channels of expression for emotional drives that might otherwise take an anti-social form.

The view that art must be socially useful is no new one. *Kavya* should be *shivetarakshataye*, for "the removal of ill," according to Mammata. Even Plato, a supreme poet and artist lost in the mazes of philosophy, says that when the poets come to our gates, we should treat them courteously and crown them with garlands, but keep them outside the state. Gosson, in the sixteenth century, admirably expresses this point of view in his *School of Abuse* :—

Pull off the visard that Poets maske in; you shall disclose their reproch, bewray their vanitie, loth their wantonnesse, lament their follie, and perceive their sharpe sayings to be placed as Pearles in Dunghills, fresh pictures on rotten walles, chaste matrons apparel on common Curtesans. These are the cuppes of Circes, that turne reasonable creatures into brute Beasts.

Two centuries later, Peacock said similarly disagreeable things about literature and poetry :—

The highest inspirations of poetry are resolvable into three ingredients: the rant of unregulated passion, the whining of exaggerated feeling, and the cant of factitious sentiment; and can therefore serve only to ripen a splendid lunatic like Alexander, a puling driveller like Werter, or a morbid dreamer like Wordsworth. It can never make a philosopher, nor a statesman, nor in any class of life an useful or rational man."

He states the charge more succinctly thus :—

(Poetry) cannot claim the slightest share in any one of the comforts and utilities of life of which we have witnessed so many and so rapid advances.

The offence of poetry—and of literature generally—is that it has not contributed to the Industrial Revolution or the Five-Year Plan or the

Forward Bloc. Its crime is that it is not the handmaid of politics, science, economics, or social reform. The head and front of its offending is that it is itself, and not something else. Swinburne was right when he said that a school of poetry subordinated to any school of doctrine, subjugated and shaped and utilised by any moral idea to the exclusion of native impulse and spiritual instinct, will produce work fit to live when the noblest specimens of humanity are produced by artificial incubation. One of the first statutes of the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers states: "In any community literature is naturally at the service of one or another class." That is not literature; it may be journalism, it may be polemics, it may be propaganda, legitimate or otherwise, but it is not literature. An emperor like Marcus Aurelius, a tramp like W. H. Davies, a devotee like Mira Bai, a revolutionary like Rousseau, an exile like Tolstoi, the medieval Dante, the Victorian Browning—are great, and Kalidasa, Saadi, Tagore, Shakespeare and Cervantes are great, not because they had the duty of propagating political principles or were imbued with class consciousness, but because they have certain elements of permanence and universality which are above time and space. Dealing with the literature of today, Mr. Scott-James says:—

The great gain to literature in recent years is that it is more closely related to action and those general ideas which lead to action. Its great corresponding defect is its loss in form, in universality, in that disinterestedness which is essential to art.

What, then, is literature? It is a great utterance, a cry of a great spirit at the sight of the life he sees—a sigh, a smile, or a cheer—tears or laughter or ecstasy—an expression of the mind of a man, of his race, yes, of his age, but to be really great, it must be an expression of the mind of Everyman....Like Wordsworth's skylark, it is true to the kindred points of heaven and home. It expresses the spirit of the age, but, transcending it, it expresses universal human truth which alone can invest it with immortality. It is true that no man can walk abroad save on his own shadow; the artist's personality is certain to be reflected in his work, thought and sensibility; the characteristics of the race and country to which he belongs will find their way to his work; the environments in which he has been brought up and lives, the conditions of his life, the circumstances of hardship or comfort that are his lot, will impress his art. But there will always be—there must always be—something else that can ensure permanence: and that is liberty—freedom from the shackles of circumstance and convention, from the limitations of time and space, from the beliefs and ordinances and laws of his country and his age. Art is free. Freedom, is the breath of its nostrils. Freedom, not escape; or if it is escape, it is escape from the hot-

house atmosphere of the prison to the fresh air without. That is how Art is without age. That is how it appeals to everyone and is ever fresh and ever young. No hungry generation can tread it down; it never sheds its leaves, nor ever bids the spring adieu. Lenin declared that Liberty is a bourgeois illusion. *Art and literature will meet their doom once liberty is denied to the artist and man of letters. Great literature cannot be manufactured to order, whether it be the order of the bourgeois or the proletariat.* The rich patrons of the past were no more able to dictate to the artist than the mighty dictators of today can command the production of anything durable. Hegel's observation is true that the history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of Freedom. Whatever unholy deeds may ravage the world, even though ruthless warriors should wage incessant wars, in art is freedom, joy, and light, and certitude and peace.

What is there that can feel the touch of time in Æschylus' vision of a towering cliff as a thing brooding apart in lonely thought? Kalidasa's description of Shakuntala "sarasijamanuviddham shaivalenápi ramyam"; Rama's lines about Sita in the *Uttaracharita*:—

इयं गेहे लक्ष्मीरियममृतवर्तिर्नयनयो
रसावस्याः स्पर्शो वपुषि बहुलश्चन्दनरसः।
अयं बाहुः कण्ठे शिशिरमसृणो मौक्तिकसरः
किमस्या न प्रेयो यदि परमसह्यस्तु विरहः॥

are as capable of touching us today as in the past. Ghalib's

आगे आती थी हाले दिल पर हँसी,
अब किसी बात पर नहीं आती॥

or

कोई वीरानी सी वीरानी है?
दश्त को देखकर घर याद आया।

or Iqbal's

लगती है चोट दिलपर आता है याद जिस दम,
शबनम के आंसुओं पर कलियों का मुस्कराना।"

cannot become obsolete whatever class or community may happen to dominate the political sphere. When Bihari wrote:—

कागद पर लिखत न बनत, कहत सँदेस लजाति।
कहि है सब तेरो हियौ मेरो हिय की बात॥

or again:—

देखौ, जागति वैसिये, साँकर लगी कपाट
कित है आवत, जात भगि, को जानै किहि वाट।

or when Deva wrote:—

वेही ससि-सूरज उवत निसि दौस, वेही
नखत समूह झलकत नभ न्यारो सो;
वेई 'देव' दीपक समीप करि देखे, वेही
दून्यौ करि देख्यौ चैत पून्यौ को उजारो सो;
वेई वन-बागन विलोकै सीस-महल,
कनकमनि मोती कछू लागत न प्यारो सो;
वाही चन्दमुखी की वा मन्द मुसुकानि विन
जानि परो सब जग अधिक अँध्यारो सो॥

they were expressing sentiments and moods that are as old as creation and yet new and fresh to every individual human being who feels the joy of discovery, even though his remotest ancestors also expe-

rienced the identical shade of sorrow or delight. The hand of time dare not touch such lines as the following. They bring a ray of sunshine, a gleam of joy in every heart, a sense of fulfilment, a consciousness of effort succeeding :—

तोमार सभाय कत ना गान
कतई आचेन गुनी ;
गुन हीनेर गान खानि आज
बाजल तोमार प्रेमे।
लागल विश्वतारेर माझे
एकटि करुण स्वर,
हाते लये वरणमाला
एले तुमि नेमे,
मोर विजन घरेर द्वारेर काछे
दांडाले, नाथ थेमे।

(*Gitanjali*)

When Marlowe makes Faustus say of Helen,

Was this the face that launcht a thousand ships,
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium ?

he passes beyond the present and past, beyond Troy and Europe and Greek and English, and is just man marvelling at the eternal charm of a woman's face. Flecker, addressing a Poet a thousand years hence, says :—

I care not if you bridge the seas,
Or ride secure the cruel sky,
Or build consummate palaces
Of metal or of masonry.
But have you wine and music still,
And statues and bright-eyed love,
And foolish thoughts of good or ill,
And prayers to them who sit above ?

These are eternal.

W. B. Yeats in one of his last poems says :—

Seek those images
That constitute the wild,
The lion and the virgin,
The harlot and the child.

Find in middle air
An eagle on the wing,
Recognise the fire
That makes the muses sing.

Another modern poet, Stephen Spender, says :—

Readers of this strange language,
We have come at last to a country
Where light equal, like the shine from snow, strikes all faces,
Here you may wonder
How it was that works, money, interest, building, could ever hide
The palpable and obvious love of man for man.
Oh, comrades, let not those who follow after
—The beautiful generation that shall spring from our sides—
Let not them wonder how after the failure of banks,
The failure of cathedrals and the declared insanity of our rulers,
We lacked the spring-like resources of the tiger,
Or of plants who strike out new roots to gushing waters.
But through torn-down portions of old fabric let their eyes
Watch the admiring dawn explode like a shell
Around us, dazing us with its light-like snow.

Love, union, separation ; hope and frustration ; fruitless prayer and supplication ; rapture and despair ; the desire of the moth for the star ; dance and music and the joy of well-being ; jealousy and terror ; death and the longing for life after death or the craving for a state of non-existence ; unceasing delight in nature's many sights and sounds and the fragrance that is wafted by many breezes—these are woven into

the texture of our being and remain with us, whatever else comes or goes.

Artists are either impressing upon us "the sense of tears in things human," "the still sad music of humanity," the "heart-break in the heart of things," "eko rasah karuna eva,"—"Maut se pahle admi gham se najaat paye kyon?" or else telling us that "the days that make us happy, make us wise"; or else bidding us "greet the unseen with a cheer." They suggest the inscrutable mystery of the Sphinx, the riddle of Mona Lisa's smile, the physical grace of Apollo Belvedere, the benevolence of Padmapani at Ajanta, the perfection of Venus de Milo. The greatest among them take us through all the sensations and feelings of which human nature is capable, making us laugh one moment and moan the next, exult now in the grandeur of man and realise again his insignificance, glory in his goodness and nobility and virtue and be appalled at his meanness and stupidity and downright villainy. All the moods of man are reflected in a great artist's work. Tears and laughter and praise find there impassioned expression. The reason why Shakespeare is so remarkable is that, without ceasing to be himself, without forgetting that he was an Englishman and an Elizabethan, he retains within his works elements that make him immune from "the iniquity of oblivion." There need be no regret that he wrote for the Globe Playhouse: he could not otherwise have afforded to retire and live in comfort at Stratford. The groundlings delighted in the foolery of the clowns; the courtiers were pleased at the attack on the virtuous who because of their virtue would not allow cakes and ale; the Queen would be flattered at the description of the imperial votaress who passed on, in maiden meditation, fancy free; the politicians and patriots would repeat with pride, "this other Eden, this demi-paradise." But the Elizabethan groundlings, puritans, merchants, courtiers, and politicians are forgotten or live only in the dusty pages of history; it is precisely that part of Shakespeare which is Elizabethan that has become obscure and valueless as pure literature, though still useful to the historian. What remains is unalloyed gold, and how much there is of it!

After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.

Unarm, Eros; the long day's task is done,
And we must sleep.

The bright day is done,
And we are for the dark.

Vex not his ghost; O! let him pass; he hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust; Man delights not me; no, nor woman neither.

All our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.

I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice.

The wheel is come full circle; I am here.

Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have
Immortal longings in me.

Or in a different key :—

Lord ! what fools these mortals be !

Motley's the only wear ! I am ambitious for motley.

Beware instinct ; the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a great matter, I was a coward on instinct. I shall think the better of myself and thee during my life ; I for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince.

We that are true lovers run into strange capers.

I pray you, mar no more of my verses with reading them ill-favouredly.

One cannot imagine any race of men that will outlive the appeal of those parts of an artist's work that are bound up with the vital, elemental, permanent features of life, with human nature, with the universe within and the universe beyond.

* * *

During recent years we have heard and read of " progressive literature," and its protagonists speak of it with the respect due to a fresh discovery, with the reverence due to a new divinity. One of their prophets asserts that Poetry and Propaganda are two sides of the same shield. Caudwell, in his *Studies in a Dying Culture*, says :—

Post-medieval poets have suffered from the illusion of free will, " the bourgeois illusion " ; they have sought freedom by the assertion of their individual wills against society, and have necessarily failed to achieve their object, because real freedom can only be gained by co-operation with society.

In his *Illusion and Reality* the same writer asserts :—

In bourgeois art man is conscious of the necessity of outer reality but not of his own, because he is unconscious of the society that makes him what he is. He is only a half-man. Communist poetry will be complete, because it will be man conscious of his own necessity as well as that of outer reality.

In an article in the *Left Review* (March 1937), Mr. Randall Swingler wrote :—

The truly free man is not the man who is free to choose, but the man who is free from the necessity of choice, the man in whom there are no two conflicting wills, but whose power is perfectly organised under one compulsion.

Here are some progressive *obiter dicta*. In *The Mind in Chains*, Mr. Edward Upwards says :—

Unless the writer in his everyday life takes the side of the workers, he cannot, no matter how talented he may be, write a good book.

In *Crisis and Criticism* Alick West says, " The beauty of literature is the felt truth that we live through organised political activity." The same writer condemns James Joyce's *Ulysses* because " there is not a worker in the book, no disputes between employers and labour, no struggle for wages, no strikes." Ikranof, a high Bolshevist official, stated in the *Pravda Vostoka* in 1932 that the censor ostracised the works of Tchekov because " one meets in them in every passage the words God, spirit, and the like." A poet, eager to praise Lenin, wrote :—

We advance under the pressure of the elements.

Lo, lead us who follow you towards a luminous goal,

Oh, chief of the caravan.

The "progressive" censor was indignant. "Is Our Soviet Union," he asked, "by any chance a desert? Do we by any chance ride on camel-back through the steppes? Why does not the poet rather speak of tractors, locomotives, aeroplanes?" Philip Henderson, one of the more moderate members of this group, says:—

> It is impossible for a creative writer to withdraw from the dynamic life of the society of his time, or attempt to impose a static order inherited from the past upon the living present, without committing spiritual suicide.

True, but what puerile folly to ignore the past altogether and imagine our fathers and all those who have preceded us to be as though they had never lived, never thought, spoken, and achieved! The human race is not just beginning its life, compelled to acquire every bit of knowledge through personal experience. The inheritance of the past cannot be ignored; there may be, there are many worn out creeds, many an obsolete dogma, numerous mistaken notions; but there is also a wealth of wisdom, vision, truth that man can ignore only as a result of blind stupidity and crass ignorance. The new shibboleths that we are asked to accept are that art is a sexual instinct and that it must depend upon a historical concept. When half-baked enthusiasts talk unctuously of class-war and bourgeois and the proletariat, they think of man only as an instrument of economic force. Even Engels was forced to admit, as long ago as 1890 (in a letter to J. Bloch): "Marx and I are ourselves partly to blame for the fact that younger writers lay more stress on the economic side than is due to it." Class-war; enthusiasm for the peasants; sublimation of the sex-instinct—these are only some of the many themes of literature and cannot possibly be said to constitute the only sources of literary inspiration. Even "progressive" writers cannot always be writing about the class-struggle; as Day Lewis said in the *Left Review* (July 1935): "Even class-conscious workers sometimes fell in love and enjoyed a day in the country." But we are told:—

> The seven modern wonders are the increasing recognition that equal opportunity belongs to all individuals of all races and creeds or lack of creed; the labour movement; the rising opposition to violence and murder; the emancipation of women; modern psychology; birth-control; and the development of machinery to lessen labour. The poet who cannot find inspiration in these words is no seer, no true poet.

We rub our eyes in wonder and amazement. The autumn sunset; the multi-coloured clouds; love; death; the might of the sea; the beckoning ghost along the moonlight shade; the darkling plain and the starlit desert; the unconquerable hope; amber grapes and green figs; the prattle of children; —are these, O Apollo, to be no more haunts meet for thee?

A phrase, as intoxicating to the pres-

ent generation as the term "progressive," is "modernism." Every generation regards itself as taking several steps forward, out-stripping its predecessors, and leaving behind, far behind, those whom the past honoured as leaders of the vanguard. But never before has "modernism" been considered to be the pure cream of wisdom and sole type of intelligence. Time was when what was ancient was revered merely because of its being ancient. Now it is a crime to refer to what belonged to yesterday and something worse to allude to the day before. "Modernism" connotes innovation, experiment, destruction, crudeness in place of elegance, discord in preference to harmony, not beauty but ugliness, defiance of all accepted notions of good taste, vulgarity, the glorification of what is ignoble. What was held to be respectable and decent; what was regarded to be virtuous; all established ideas of grace and beauty; what is inherited—must all be abandoned, rejected in favour of—more grace, more beauty, more decency, higher virtue? Oh no, the new generation worships at the shrine of ugliness and obscenity. That is so, not in literature alone, but in every form of art. As Dean Inge says,

A modernist painter will cover his canvas with zigzags or depict a woman with green hair; a modernist sculptor will carve figures apparently suffering from elephantiasis or acromegaly; a modernist architect will put two or three packing-cases together and call it a house or a church.

The modernists have torn asunder the mysteries of birth and death. So far-reaching and wide-spread has been the influence of the new cult that we find D. H. Lawrence write such verses as:

Chastity, beloved chastity,
O beloved chastity,
how infinitely dear to me
chastity, beloved chastity!

That my body need not be
fingered by the mind,
or prostituted by the free
contact of cerebral flesh—.

O leave me clean from mental fingering
from the cold copulation of the will,
from all the white, self-conscious lechery
the modern mind calls love!

From all the mental poetry
of deliberate love-making,
from all the false felicity
of deliberately taking

the body of another unto mine,
O God deliver me!
leave me alone, let me be!

Chastity, dearer far to me
than any contact that can be
in this mind-mischievous age!"

One realises that Lawrence's case was pathological. But what is one to say of some of the pieces in Yeats' *Last Poems?*

Bird sighs for the air,
Thought for I know not where,
For the womb the seed sighs.
Now sinks the same rest
On mind, on nest,
On straining thighs.

* * *

From pleasure of the bed,
Dull as a worm,
His rod and its butting head
Limp as a worm,
His spirit that has fled
Blind as a worm.

* * *

Slim adolescence that a nymph has stripped,
Peleus on Thetis stares.
Her limbs are delicate as an eyelid,
Love has blinded him with tears;
But Thetis' belly listens.
Down the mountain walls
From where Pan's cavern is
Intolerable music falls.
Foul goat-head, brutal arm appear,
Belly, shoulder, bum,
Flash fishlike; nymphs and satyrs
Copulate in the foam.

This lapse into the nakedness of the savage can be explained either by the poverty of subject matter or else by the desire to be considered, at the age of seventy, a "modernist." The craze for sensationalism is no new one. The wish to shock and startle was present among the Elizabethans; it is present in Wordsworth and Shelley; Swinburne ruffled the placid waters of Victorianism; the Georgians too in their time contributed their share to the periodic exhibition of novelty and modernism. But soon good sense prevails and the course of literature begins to flow in its natural stream. Boulders and rocks help to impart force and vigour to the stream. They have their usefulness. But the river must flow on, on to the mighty sea where it finds its appointed end in the unending ebb and tide that is life.

Literary fashions change and alter. Centres of emphasis shift. Who does not remember that about a hundred years ago there was almost a riot in a French theatre, for Victor Hugo had introduced the practice of enjambment into dramatic alexandrines? One may recall, too, the fight over the use of "inkhorn terms," the bitter controversies for or against blank verse, the war between classicism and romanticism, and the numerous skirmishes on naturalism and symbolism. But whatever fight may be on and whether one belongs to one group or another, never has the importance of creative imagination been in dispute. As Charles Morgan said in an address delivered at the Paris University:—

Does it (a work of art) contain with it that seed which enables men to imagine creatively and will enable them to do so for generation after generation?

Can it communicate the artists' experiences to those remote in time, place, space, and social milieu? If it can, it is not useful primarily as providing an escape from life, nor as affording harmless entertainment for the indolent, but as one of the formative experiences of life. Literature specially, with its peculiar characteristic of being part of the living tissue of society, is of value inasmuch as it enables us to discover the past. Extreme preoccupation with the present brings about spiritual poverty. As T. S. Eliot says: "No poet, no artist of any art has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation, is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists." These dead poets and artists, the classics, maintain the tradition of spiritual liberty. They ensure a continuity and prevent the fanaticism of individuals or nations. They help to save one from the

delusion that " the world is all before it where to choose ?" They preserve one from imagining that there is no such thing as law and the transgression of law, that sin is a phantom and that what has so far been held sacred is merely so much prejudice. The classics help one to attain what Newman so eloquently describes :—

That perfection of the Intellect is the clear, calm, accurate vision and comprehension of all things, as far as the fine mind can embrace them, each in its place, and with its own characteristics upon it. It is almost prophetic from its knowledge of history ; it is almost heart-searching from its knowledge of human nature ; it has almost supernatural charity from its freedom from littleness and prejudice ; it has almost the repose of faith, because nothing can startle it ; it has almost the beauty and harmony of heavenly contemplation, so intimate is it with the eternal order of things and the music of the spheres.

* * *

Great literature must remain literature and not become subservient to religion, politics, economics, or science. Its borders are wide and they touch and embrace every topic. It sings of peace and also glorifies war ; it celebrates monarchs and also exalts the humble peasant. It describes the mean and vulgar works of man and also high objects, enduring things. But whatever the theme, the treatment must be elevating and the man of letters must seek to invest it with beauty and sincerity. A false or strained note will mean failure. The touch must be sure. Romanticism ; classicism ; realism ; imagism—are convenient labels, but they do not carry us far. The moods shift. Opinions alter. Visions change name as they change quarter. But man remains, and grace and beauty cleave to the life of the rains in the grasses, the life of the dews on the leaves. And when man interprets them and describes them and sings about them, he creates that which triumphs over decay.

AMARANATHA JHA.

This is the story told in Libyan tales :
An eagle, struck with arrow from a bow,
Said, when he saw the crafty winged thing,
" So not by others but by our own plumes
We're taken."

—ÆSCHYLUS

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

TWO POETS ON THE BUDDHA'S LIFE

A CONTRAST IN METHOD

I

Sixty-four years ago, when Edwin Arnold published his *Light of Asia*, the literary world in both England and America was taken by storm. The public accorded it an admiring welcome which his later work, *The Light of the World*, failed to attract. *The Light of Asia* was quickly translated into all the principal languages of Europe and soon ran into many editions. So far there have been in England alone sixty editions and in America eighty. But this sudden burst of popularity was temporary and Edwin Arnold's masterpiece has fallen into comparative neglect. It has its place along with other volumes on the shelf of the serious student of Buddhism, of the life of Gautama or again of Indian poetry. But though, like many other classics, *The Light of Asia* is today more admired than read, it is ever sure of reverent regard from an audience discriminating though small.

Many causes contributed to its immediate success. It appeared when the glow of a second romanticism in the Pre-Raphaelite movement had warmed the poetic consciousness of England. Swinburne was in the heyday of his youthful exuberance and the far-off Orient seemed to promise to poetic aspirants more warmth, more colour and a richer vein of romance. *The Light of Asia's* setting, unfamiliar to most readers, its strange names and its Sanskrit terminology, its variety of scenery, its author's narrative skill and, above all, its great theme, all contributed to its instant appeal. Though to some the moral precepts of the Buddha were familiar, though there were books on later developments of Buddhism in China, Japan, Tibet and Central Asia, there was no earlier popular account of the Indian beginnings of Buddhism or of the life of its great teacher. To some it came as a shock that a *man* had preached the essential virtues of Christianity six centuries before the advent of Jesus Christ.

Brian Hodgson, the British Resident in Nepal, discovered in 1824 the Sanskrit originals of the Buddhist canon in certain monasteries. Burnouf, the celebrated French Orientalist, in his translation of the *Lalita-Vistara* gave to Europe the first complete life of Gautama. His translation, however, hardly reached beyond the desk of the interested scholar. The discovery of the Pali canon in Ceylon a few years later attracted scholars like Spence Hardy and Rhys Davids, after the publication of whose writings knowledge about the Buddha and his doctrines became more widely spread. So when Edwin Arnold gave in simple and fluent narrative poetry the life and teachings of the Great Englightened One, the public was ready and eager to welcome it.

Edwin Arnold utilised all available sources, particularly the works of Spence Hardy and Burnouf. He had

studied Sanskrit and as Principal of the Deccan College he had had opportunities to collect first-hand many legends and anecdotes about the Buddha prevailing in different parts of the country. He transliterates and translates Sanskrit names and terms with ease and accuracy, whereas earlier English poets like Thomas Moore or Lord Byron, in their enthusiasm for Oriental themes, had twisted many Eastern classical names into impossible perversions.

But background and careful scholarship apart, the poem has incontestable merit. Remarkable alike for verbal facility and narrative ability, Edwin Arnold has the poet's eye in the choice of his material and the artist's sense of proportion in ordering the rich store of detail at his command. More than these, he has warm admiration for the personage whose life and teaching form the subject of his song, so that his utterance is moved by genuine feeling. A powerful imagination which reconstructs with minute care the palaces and pleasure-gardens of ancient Kapilavastu is coupled with a sincere appreciation of the principles which the Buddha embodied in his life. He thus is able, in the last book of his poem, to achieve the almost impossible task of epitomising, in language understandable to the ordinary reader, the underlying principles of Buddhism, the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path that leads to Enlightenment and to Nirvāna. In that last book he summarises in splendid quatrains the message which to this day holds sway over countless millions of human hearts.

II

To the quiet gorgeousness, the slow, luxurious movement, the richness and the variety of detail of *The Light of Asia*, Masefield's *Gautama the Enlightened*,* treating the same theme, offers a startling contrast of poetic method. It is a masterpiece of compression. The story is cut down to its barest outline, all detail and all description being scrupulously avoided. Masefield's poem is essentially dramatic, its brevity contributing in no small measure to its lyrical intensity. It is what is known as the dramatic monologue. The poet does not appear on the scene, the whole story being narrated by one of the characters. Here it is the Buddha himself who narrates in retrospect the whole story of his princely happiness, of his awareness of life's ironies, of his inner turmoil, of his struggle and his Enlightenment. The Great One reviews his own past. His narrative opens at a point where, full of princely ambition and surrounded on all sides by happiness, he stood competing with two others for the hand of Yashodhara. It was a period of his life when he could ask himself

> ...What happier is
> Or can be, than to seek a Kingdom's love,
> To watch over and guard a City's fate,
> And guide a Nation's fortunes happily?

It was a period when he could sing with supreme satisfaction,

> Surely, the Life of Man is beautiful
> Beyond all telling; I have never seen
> Anything, yet, that is not beautiful....
>
> I shall be winner of the contest, surely
> For all my Destiny seems happiness....

Then the contest was over and the princess, the "Rose of Women" was his. With a swift dramatic stroke, Masefield introduces the turning-point

* *Gautama, the Enlightened and Other Verse.* By JOHN MASEFIELD. (William Heinemann, Ltd., London. 5s.)

in the story. The happiness of the past, the inexpressible happiness of the then present and of the anticipated future, serves only as a contrasting background for what was to follow. In the very hour of his triumph came the blow that led him away on his great quest.

And then, before my triumph, there came this:
A sick man, mad with sorrow, was brought by
Beside his poor wife's corpse, a young thing, merry,
So the poor madman said, untimely dead.
And after them the madman's father came.
I saw the three:—Sickness, Old Age and Death,
The woe of life, till then kept hidden from me.
I learned, for the first time, that I, Siddartha,
Being a Man, was chained unto the three.

There could be no happiness so long as Sickness, Age and Death hovered over human lives to darken them with their dread shadows. Forth he went in search of healing for such bitter pain. He starved the rebel flesh but found no peace. Then is told in a few lines the story of Sujata's mercy and the leading to the great tree where he saw man caught in the illusions of desire. Light came to him under the tree. Desire and nescience dropped from his mind forever and the poem closes on the exultant note of triumph, of fulfilment :—

....I was set free,
I knew that I need never live again,
Save as a mind that with undying Peace
Moves among mortals in their misery
Showing a way from darkness into light.

The thirst of the human soul for freedom from the weary round of life and death has been for centuries a subject for poets. Masefield's great achievement is that he here tells within less than two hundred lines, without the sacrifice of essentials, the story of the crisis in the life of Gautama, of his quest and its consummation in the complete illumination. *Gautama the Enlightened* is as intensely dramatic in conception as is Masefield's other story of a humbler crisis and conversion, *The Everlasting Mercy*, the story of Saul Kane, a village ne'er-do-weel.

Lyric passion, human tenderness and an intense dramatic awareness invest this simple narrative with a poetic richness which could be woven only by Masefield with his Spenserian love of beauty and his Chaucerian gift of simple narration. England's Poet-Laureate has paid his respectful homage here in beautiful song to the blossom on the tree of the human race which opens once in myriad years, to one of the greatest men that ever walked the earth and to one who taught us how, in the words of Edwin Arnold,

...pity makes the world
Soft to the weak and noble for the strong.

V. M. INAMDAR

SHORT NOTICES

Lyric Festoons. By V.R.M. CHETTIAR. (Shakti Karyalayam, Karaikudi. Re.1/-) "An Artist oscillates between altitude and attitude," observes Mr. Chettiar. But attitude preponderates in these highly stylised reflections, more aphoristic than lyrical. The effect here is rather like fireworks, showy, staccato, sometimes pleasing, sometimes fantastic. The writer achieves some unusual combinations of words, but one expects of an aphorism more solid food for thought than one finds in this book. Many a bright phrase is wasted on a thought quite commonplace, like diamonds at the breakfast-table. For all the straining after effect there is an occasional felicitous reflection, but the general impression can be summarised in Mr. Chettiar's own line :—"Thoughts peck at words, and vanish into the land of Phrases."

E. M. H.

The Message of the Himalayas. By SWAMI SAMBUDDHANANDA, with a Foreword by the RT. HON. M. R. JAYAKAR. (Published by the Author, Shri Ramakrishna Ashram, Khar, Bombay 21. As. 12 or 2*s*.). The Himalayan chain is described in an ancient Commentary as "the belt" of the earth, in which "lies concealed the life and health of all that lives and breathes." It is not alone that, as Swami Sambuddhananda points out, India owes her fertility to the physical Himalayas. He deals most interestingly with their symbolism of the pure, the universal, the unchanging Real.

A people's attitude to its mountains is revealing. Europe looks to her Alps for scenery, for health, for winter sports. India has always lifted reverent eyes to the Eternal Snows whose message is "Aspire!" The Himalayas, as the Foreword says, embody "all that is sublime and inspiring in Indian thought." Their physical heights may yield to the explorer, who yet may come down empty-handed. For there are heights no sinful foot may tread but that await the pure and ardent devotee, though he has never left his plains or even set his foot on Indian soil. The "majesty of their ineffable serenity" breathes peace.

M.

The Stream Divine: Being the Discourses Given by Bhagwan Shri Shukacharyaji Maharaj. By HIRALAL C. TARKAS; translated by P. M. TRIVEDI. (Shree Shukadeo Shreyas Sadhak Mandal, 198, Tenth Road, Khar, Bombay 21. Re. 1/-). Devotion, natural to Indians, is often lavished on unworthy objects. The devotees who gathered round this Vaishnava saint of Gujarat who died in 1929 seem to have been more fortunate than many, for his moral earnestness and spiritual fervour seem unquestionable. He pronounced certain Hatha-Yoga practices valueless for self-realisation and stressed purity, tolerance, holy company. The writer's touching sincerity disarms criticism even of format.

H.

Hindu Social Institutions. Two Lectures. By PANDHARINATH VALAVALKAR. (Baroda State Press. As. 1/6.) Dr. Valavalkar, the author of a book of the same title, delivered these lectures last year under the auspices of the Baroda Department of Education. Unlike modern Western social theorists, the Hindu starts with the relations of the individual with the Ultimate Universal Principle, deriving from those his relations with family, group and society. The *varṇa-dharma* rests theoretically on natural qualities; the *āśrama-dharma* on one's stage in life. The combination, *varṇāśrama-dharma*, underlies the Hindu theory of social organisation. *Dharma* (duty) is the key-note and the permeation of the *āśramas* by the spirit of *yajna* (sacrifice) is a characteristic and an inspiring note. Karma, as illuminatingly expounded here, is indeed "far from the rigid determinism or fatalism which some have tried to make of it."

H.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"_____ *ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay, Mr. B. J. Wadia, told a Dadar audience on March 7th that "degrees were useless unless people imbibed the great ideal of humanity and brotherhood of man." (*The Bombay Chronicle*, 8th March). Life, he said, was a continuous whole. He ascribed the present catastrophe to superiority complex. Humanity, he said, must realise that all nations are alike and the old school of exclusive Nationalism must disappear.

The only force that could usher in eternal peace in the world, was the non-violent doctrine of Mahatma Gandhi.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, who presided, made a similar profession of faith. He declared that "there should be Brotherhood of all Nations" and that

the doctrine of non-violence preached and practised by Mahatma Gandhi alone could bring about peace.

To recognise the profound truth of this statement is to resign oneself sadly to a long future for the world of periodic turmoil punctuated by uneasy peace. For nations are made up of individuals and how many even among Gandhiji's professed followers are thoroughgoing practitioners of Ahimsa in word and act, to say nothing of thought and feeling?

And yet we shall not stand quite shamed before posterity. Upon the thorny, twisted tree of modern civilisation a Gandhiji has flowered. The potency of an ideal embodied may work its miracle of regeneration in many minds and hearts. One by one, men and women must come soon or late to follow the example set. A single Gandhiji is an earnest of the better world to be, when the nations have come to the realisation which, Tagore once wrote, Gandhiji was most eloquently proving:—

that man is essentially a spiritual being, that he flourishes the best in the realm of the moral and the spiritual, and most positively perishes both body and soul in the atmosphere of hatred and gunpowder smoke.

In an article contributed to the *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) of January 8th, H. G. Wells inveighs against the planners of the postwar world who, for a variety of reasons, advance fantastic claims on behalf of different nations. Not a week passes without somebody saying something about the New World Order and without fanciful reconstructions of the map of Europe being made. One nation now under the Nazi heel looks back to its legendary expanse of a vanished empire and voices its longing to reclaim it. Others stress so-called cultural, ethnological or economic considerations in support of their claim for territories to be re-acquired after the war. Others still suggest "buffer-states" to prevent unwarranted expansion and yet others would have "strategic frontiers" and key-

ports. Indeed, it would be an impossible undertaking to satisfy these clamorous claims!

All this idle and wishful manipulation of the new map of Europe, Mr. Wells rightly characterises as "Idiots' delight." It can serve no useful purpose. Strategic frontiers and key-ports, pretensions to ethnic or economic unity, racial purity and all the rest, are tricks of an old game that has ended disastrously. None of them excludes the prime cause of such disruption—mutual distrust. Any settlement on such shifting considerations can only be a patched-up affair. "Let us be friendly but let us also be armed!" Selfish territorial acquisitiveness, economic competition, ruthless suppression of minorities will all follow in the wake of short-sighted proposals for reordering future Europe unless that basic distrust is removed. Everyone must recognise his neighbour's right to share what life has to offer. The basic fact of common humanity must be recognised in all plannings for the future. Otherwise all plans will be necessarily provisional, and fraught with darker possibilities for the future. There is more meaning than is ordinarily realised in the description of civilisation as a co-operative venture. As Mr. Wells puts it:—

> Some of us have been infected with the idea of "planning," without grasping how plans must interlock to have any sense whatever.

Prof. Howard Mumford Jones of Harvard University (U. S. A.) writing in the October *Atlantic Monthly* on "Tribalism," pleads for global thinking, or thinking as members of the human race. And "global thinking requires global education." "We must," he urges, "get out from under the shadow of Occidental tribalism and move into the broader realm of responsibility for the human race." He reminds his readers pertinently that Western Europe is a rather minor peninsula on the great land-mass of Asia-Africa-Russia, that

> of the nineteen hundred million human beings in the world, something like thirteen hundred million do not live in Western Europe or the New World, and have very little interest in its cultural history, and that the Hindu population of India about equals the total population of North and South America....
>
> Our absorption with the culture of Western Europe must go. We need to learn in all humility how small a part we and Europe have played in the total history of mankind. We must immensely expand our mental horizon....However influential the ideas of Mr. T. S. Eliot may be, they cannot compare in importance or influence with the ideas of Siddhartha Gautama known as Buddha; until we can humble ourselves to learn that there are cultures and traditions, literature and wisdom, art and morality older and richer, perhaps even wiser than our own—until we can remake our thought about history and humanity in some such terms as these, we cannot reach the height of our great opportunity.

Incidentally, Professor Jones wonders pertinently about the sending of American Negro troops to Australia, so recently proclaimed by a high Australian official "a white man's country" now and prospectively.

> Why we should ask coloured men to die in order that Australia may remain a white man's country remains a military mystery. Substitute "free" for "white" in the statement, and it will make sense. Put "white" back in again, and you have tribalism.

Writing in *The Hindu* of 15th February 1943 on Shri Madhvacharya, our valued contributor Dr. R. Naga Raja Sarma draws valuable lessons from the student years of the great teacher. He commends not only his concern for

truth, his intellectual integrity, but also his many-sided physical activities. At a time when various methods of education are being experimented with and almost none has been productive of satisfactory results, the lessons which Dr. Sarma finds in the life of the religious teacher disclose valuable principles.

Too often the questioning or inquisitive student falls out with the teacher if the latter is not open-minded enough to appreciate his own limitations. Enforcing mute submission to pedagogic authority cannot but stifle the healthy hunger for truth and the power of creative thinking. The ancient precept that the teacher should always welcome defeat at the hands of the taught conceals an important principle. The teacher's business is to put his pupils on the right track and to aid them towards independent thinking. Cardinal Newman put it well when he said that the teacher was only an older student.

Unless education is a co-operative effort in the acquisition of knowledge and the discernment of truth, it is not worth its name. And in that endeavour the importance of intellectual honesty need hardly be stressed. Its corollary is openness to correction on the part of the pedagogue. Error by whomsoever introduced must be brought to light. Sri Madhvacharya is reported to have supplied an omission when his father in a public discourse failed to make clear the meaning of a particular term.

Much is said nowadays about the need for physical education. The great Acharya was good at sports, adept in many feats of strength. There is widespread recognition today that a healthy body is an all but indispensable adjunct to an agile and active mind. It is a matter for congratulation, however, that sports are not made the fetish in Indian schools that they are in the West. But even over-attention to sports is less dissipative than students' frittering away energies, both physical and mental, in the pursuit of

> foolish and fashionable frivolities of metropolitan existence, and the countless comicalities of the celluloid, the shows and sophistries of the stage and the screen.

Divided attention can lead nowhere. Great teachers have been great students. Dr. Sarma counsels one-pointedness.

> From the life of Madhwa and other world-teachers and system-builders, students, if they please, may draw the supremely important lesson that they should devote their gifts and energies to ceaseless acquisition of knowledge in such a sustained and concerted manner as would enable them to excel their teachers.

Dr. K. S. Venkatraman's exhaustive study of "The Handloom *versus* Powerloom" in the last issue of the *Journal of the University of Bombay* is revealing. It shows India already very much in the grip of the forces that in the West have so largely depersonalised industry and, putting a premium on mass production, have crowded the little man so pitilessly to the wall. The mammoth industries and combines that view human labour as so many hands, with little care for heads and none for hearts, do we want them to get a firmer hold on India?

The case for mass production is specious—greater uniformity and hence greater dependability of output, and cheaper goods because labour costs are relatively lower. Human automata may be paid relatively well and yet the saving on the people displaced by the machines may far more than outbalance the wages paid. But what of general purchasing power under such a régime? The test of a nation's prosperity is not its high or low wage-scale but the number gainfully employed at decent wages.

Handloom production was considerable, varied and wide-spread at the end of the seventeenth century and through the eighteenth. Powerloom competition from the early nineteenth century on has represented an increasingly serious threat to the indigenous handloom industry, but it is less than a hundred years since Indian mills became a serious factor. Mill competition has already forced handloom weavers to give up certain lines and competition has not always been fair, mill prices being lowered sometimes to capture the market and then unjustifiably raised.

Already Indian mills account for three-fifths of the total cloth consumed in India. The handloom weaver still produces a fourth of the total but much of the mill production is in the handloom industry's main lines. And while there is some protection from foreign competition, there is none against the Indian mills. Dr. Venkatraman foresees more disastrous future competition to the handloom industry on which several millions depend unless the Government's policy of drift is given up. He urges decisive action in regard to demarcation of the fields of production, whether by law or by forcing a "voluntary" agreement. It would, as Dr. Venkatraman points out, be most difficult to re-establish the handweaving industry once it had been crushed out, even though it should be decided later to be best in Indian conditions.

Shri Vaikunth L. Mehta warns cogently in *Gram Udyog Patrika* for February against looking to industrialisation in general or to the mechanisation of agriculture in particular for the solution of India's economic ills. The latter has not proved a panacea in the U. S. A. or Canada. The volume of agricultural production rose with mechanisation, to be sure, but unemployment rose with it. A survey in the U. S. A. is reported to have shown mechanisation responsible for 25 per cent. of the unemployment throughout the country. It is claimed that never in the history of the U. S. A. had there been greater distress and more unemployment in rural areas than just before the outbreak of the present war. Similarly in Western Canada, mechanisation of agriculture was introduced on a colossal scale, adding the burden of debts so incurred to the farmers' previous financial difficulties. Holdings were increased so that machinery could be worked economically. Demand for the latest equipment led to wasteful scrapping of machinery already purchased. In short, in a number of areas mechanisation of agriculture overshot its mark. And if this was true in wealthy countries like the U. S. A., what of our impoverished Motherland? Surely a system uneconomical in Rolls-Royce countries cannot be imposed upon a land of bullock-carts without augmenting misery!

Agriculture in India does offer inadequate and precarious returns under present methods of production, transportation and marketing. But half a loaf, or even a quarter, is better than none. Large-scale replacement of field workers by machines can only increase wretchedness where, as in India, the poverty of the country imposes a check on labour-absorbing developments in other lines.

India's chief material asset is her vast supply of human labour. But human labour is an asset only in the measure of its effective utilisation. Masses of unemployed are no asset but a positive and dangerous liability. Greater production per acre is a desideratum certainly, but it can be obtained by improved methods and more intensive cultivation without the farmers' being crowded off their fields.

Industrialisation in general, Shri Mehta claims, appears as a solution for India only to those who take a superficial view of her problems. Some forms of mechanisation, he reminds us, are not labour-saving but labour-killing.

The motto for India should be human labour wherever possible and machinery only where indispensable.